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Syria denies end of embargo against Israel

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syria Friday criticised European countries that recently lifted an embargo on arms sales to Israel, saying such decisions could hinder the search for a Middle East peace settlement. "When Europe lifts the embargo against Israel and keeps it valid against the Arabs, it means that the Jewish state is getting direct support for its aggressive policies," the newspaper Al-Bath said. The daily, mouthpiece of the ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party, said support and assistance offered by the United States and Europe constituted "a reward for Israel's aggression... (which) can only increase tension in the Middle East region and block the peace process." British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Thursday his government is ready to advocate ending an arms embargo against Syria, if Syria and Israel continue to make progress toward a peace settlement. "In that context, we will be ready to raise with our European partners the lifting of the European Union arms embargo against Syria," Mr. Hurd said in a letter to the House of Commons.

Jordan Times

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Russian envoy arrives in Amman

RAMTHA (Petra) — The Russian presidential envoy Victor Posvaliuk arrived in Amman Friday evening for talks with Jordanian officials on the latest developments in the peace process and bilateral relations. Mr. Posvaliuk said in an arrival statement that he will deliver a message to His Majesty King Hussein from the Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Police hold Islamic Jihad man

GAZA (R) — The Islamic Jihad movement Friday accused Palestinian security forces in the Gaza Strip of illegally holding one of its members without charge and said it would not stay silent in the face of such acts. Muslim leaders in Gaza said the arrested man, Hani Abed, 31, was a journalist working for Al Abrar Press and Information Centre Associated with the Islamic Jihad movement which opposes the PLO's peace deal with Israel. "Four days ago Palestinian policemen searched for Hani at his home and office, but we refused to tell them his whereabouts," Mr. Abed's sister Ibtisam said. "Hani then went to the security headquarters to see what they wanted, where he is still detained to this minute," Mr. Abed is the first Palestinian detained by Palestinian Police men who took control from Israel in most of the Gaza Strip this month. Palestinian security men confirmed Mr. Abed's detention but refused to give a reason. They said he was the only person held in the Gaza Central Prison. Abdullah Al Shami, a leading Islamic Jihad figure in Gaza, told Reuters: "Instead of gaining people's popularity, the Palestinian security men are trying to appease the enemy."

Peres rejects PLO directive

WASHINGTON (AP) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres brushed aside as "irrelevant" a statement by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat asserting the validity of pre-1967 laws in Gaza and Jericho. Mr. Peres said Mr. Arafat's statement has no standing because the regulations governing Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho were worked out in the declaration of principles signed by Israel and the PLO. Mr. Peres was asked about Mr. Arafat's statement at a breakfast gathering shortly before meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who indicated concern about a series of statements by Mr. Arafat since the self-rule agreement went into effect. During a photo session with Mr. Peres, Mr. Christopher said he believes it would be very helpful if Mr. Arafat reaffirmed his commitment to peace with Israel.

Arafat receives medical check-up

TUNIS (R) — An exhausted Yasser Arafat had a check-up at a Tunis hospital this week but the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader quickly returned to work. PLO officials said Friday, Mr. Arafat had the check-up at the military hospital on Tuesday, they said. "It took about three hours but he did not spend some days, as reported by some media," a senior PLO official told Reuters. "I saw him at his office just when he came back."

Egyptian police kill suspected militant

CAIRO (AP) — Police killed a suspected Islamic militant and arrested two others in a clash Friday at Al Badari in the southern province of Assiut, police officials said. An interior ministry statement identified the dead man as Ali Abdel Rahman Salama, 24, and said he was part of a band involved in smuggling weapons into the area. Meanwhile, police in Assiut said they were searching for militants planning to attack an Assiut cinema showing "The Terrorist," a movie critical of Islamic extremists, and kill police officers newly assigned to the city.

HRH addresses InterParliamentary Council against Antisemitism

Crown Prince calls for the establishment of council to combat 'Islamophobia' in Europe

Struggle against racial, religious intolerance must be coordinated

Vital similarities exist between antisemitism, anti-Muslim feelings

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, in an address to a British Parliamentary group Thursday, called for the establishment of a council to combat "Islamophobia" in Europe, saying there are vital similarities between antisemitism and anti-Muslim feelings. "The struggle against racial and religious intolerance needs to be coordinated if it is to be effective. In this context, antisemitism must be seen as part of a wider phenomenon," Prince Hassan told the London-based Interparliamentary Council Against Antisemitism. He said if antisemitism is not seen in this way, action against all forms of prejudice and communal violence will be weakened. "For my part, the phenomenon of 'Islamophobia,' as it was termed by the Runnymede Commission, is of particular concern," Prince Hassan said. "I would like to suggest that it is also of special concern to members of this forum, for there are vital similarities between antisemitism and anti-Muslim feelings," he said.

Prince Hassan told the Council that he considers discrimination of any sort to be in violation of the Holy Koran. Noting that the end of the cold war has had other ramifications for European Muslims, the Crown Prince said that with the possibility of global Communism now a distant memory, there is a vacuum of clearly identifiable enemies. "The dogmatic exhortations of religious extremists, coupled with the drive of some Muslim states to acquire nuclear weapons, has given some commentators a fresh target: The so-called Islamic threat," Prince Hassan said. Prince Hassan also spoke about the inter-faith declaration on a Code of Business Ethics, which was launched in London Wednesday. He said that followers of Islam, Judaism and Christianity worked on the declaration and sought to "dispel misconception, to go beyond the easy stereotype, to achieve a real dialogue on the basis of their shared moral, ethical and spiritual values."

Responding to a question after the address on the Arab economic boycott to Israel, Prince Hassan said that the issue cannot be resolved outside a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Following is the full text of Prince Hassan's address: IT IS an honour for me to address the Inter-Parliamentary Council Against Antisemitism, particularly as I come before you not only as a guest, but as a member of the council. I would like to quote from the Holy Koran, which proclaims (49:13): "O mankind, we have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honoured among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous." The health of a society is best judged by the manner in which it treats those whom it considers to be other, alien, different. It is Concor Cruise O'Brien who described antisemitism as "a very light sleep." I would go further, and say that this is true of racial and religious intolerance of all

sorts, because discrimination against the other is never very far away. It is irrelevant whether the other is Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or a member of any other minority. An attack, a denigration, an exclusion of any is an affront to all. The early 1990s have seen an alarming upsurge in racial and religious discrimination, intolerance and violence. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, exclusionary notions of ethnicity and religious separatism have re-emerged. From the horrors of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, to the desecration of Jewish graves, to the burning of mosques, the spectre of racism looms large. When support for political and religious extremist groups across Europe is burgeoning, there can be no room for complacency. The struggle against racial and religious intolerance needs to be co-ordinated if it is to be effective. In this context, antisemitism must be seen as part of a wider phenomenon. If it is not seen in this way, action against all forms of prejudice and communal violence will be weakened. For my part, the phenomenon of "Islamophobia,"

as it was termed by the Runnymede Commission, is of particular concern. I would like to suggest that it is also of special concern to the members of this forum, for there are vital similarities between antisemitism and anti-Muslim feeling. Both Jews and Muslims are felt by those antagonistic towards them to be misplaced in European societies. There is, of course, an ancient religious aspect to both kinds of hostility. The tendency to view Jews and Muslims as faceless components of a vast monolith is present in both cases, and leads to crass reductionist stereotypes. We are all familiar with these images. On the one hand, we have the grasping and conspiratorial Jew; on the other, the oil-rich or terrorist Muslim. Both forms of racism demand similar responses, be they educational, legal or political. The role of religious contemporary life has been largely overlooked by political ideologues. With the emergence of the nation-state, it was widely thought that notions of ethnicity and religion would atrophy and disappear. The rise of totalitarian ideologies on the one

(Continued on page 3)

Israel lifts closure of Gaza PLO reaffirms commitment to peace

EREZ CHECKPOINT, Gaza (R) — Hundreds of Palestinians left the Gaza Strip for jobs in Israel Friday after the army lifted a week-long ban. Palestinians expressed delight with their own self-rule police manning new roadblocks Israel had demanded before lifting the ban. Israeli troops imposed the closure after Muslim militants shot dead two soldiers at a roadblock and fled to a Palestinian-ruled area in Gaza last Friday. Two days earlier Israel handed over most of Gaza to Palestinians under an interim peace deal. The army said Palestinian police would now check Gazans' cars for weapons before the vehicles approached Israeli troops. The roadblock where the killings took place

was reinforced. Palestinians now pass five roadblocks on their way to Israel: three Palestinian, one joint Palestinian-Israeli and finally the all-Israeli-manned Erez Checkpoint. Drivers showed more amazement than annoyance at the extra checkpoints. Palestinian police were apologetic performing their duties. Still, many Palestinians said the closure's end made little difference. Restrictions in place since a wave of revenge attacks over the Hebron massacre meant most people could not go to jobs in Israel. "Why should we be happy that they lifted closure when we don't have permits to go to work," said Khalil Drainili. The programme, drafted

"This lifting is not enough. We want Israel to open the borders for all workers, without any restrictions or conditions," said Raseem Al Byari, head of the Palestinian Workers Union in Gaza. In Tunis, meanwhile, the Palestinian self-rule government was Friday discussing a programme that includes reaffirmation of its commitment to peace with Israel during a meeting chaired by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat. But PLO officials denied that the programme, a draft copy of which was read to Reuters, was a response to an Israeli government demand that Mr. Arafat reaffirm his commitment to peace following controversial remarks he made earlier this month. The programme, drafted

by a committee headed by chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath, vows to continue acting through peaceful means and on the basis of international legitimacy. "A preamble to the programme contains a commitment to peaceful means and the international legitimacy represented by U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338... And to the continuation of the political struggle in order to assure the Palestinians' self-determination," Palestinian self-rule authority (PNA) member Samir Ghosheh said. Asked whether the programme was a direct response to Israeli and U.S. demands that Mr. Arafat offer assurances that he is committed to peace, Mr. Ghosheh said: "No, it is a government prog-

(Continued on page 5)

Police unseal Jericho houses

JERICHO (AP) — Moving to erase the final vestiges of occupation, Palestinian police Friday opened three homes sealed by Israeli soldiers because family members were suspected of agitating against Israeli rule. Police Commander Colonel Haj Ismail unsealed three of 15 homes in the town, wielding a battering ram with some of his men to smash open welded doors and cement blocks that filled the window frames. The individual families will unseal the other 12, he said. Women ululated and drums beat at the house of Salah Jalalah, whose house was sealed in 1989 after his son Hassan, now 26, was sentenced to three life terms for killing a suspected collaborator. Ten family members had been living in a tent in the yard since then. "We want to remove everything that reminds us of the occupation," said the colonel. "These homes belong to the youth that resisted the occupation. The Israelis sealed these homes to stop the intifada," he said. Israeli troops barred a group of left-wing Israelis from the Meretz Party, who rode to the Jordan Valley oasis on their motorbikes, from entering the city to take part. Israel sealed 314 homes in the occupied lands during the first six years of the Palestinian uprising, said this year's annual report from Betelem, an Israeli-Palestinian human rights organisation. The army also demolished 430 homes. Israel has often defended the practice, condemned internationally as collective punishment, by noting that it was inherited from the British authorities who governed during the 1917-1948 mandate. The British sealed or destroyed houses to control Jewish and Arab insurgents. Also Friday, police broke up a clash between pro-PLO activists cleaning walls of graffiti and Hamas members seeking to paint new slogans.

(Continued on page 5)

Mandela says political conflict is past

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — President Nelson Mandela said Friday that political conflict in South Africa had become a thing of the past with the installation of the democratic government of national unity. "We have put the conflicts of the past behind us and all South Africans are working together to address the national problems," Mr. Mandela told the Senate, in his maiden speech to the Upper House of Parliament. "As fellow South Africans, we are bound together by a common loyalty in South Africa and the issues which unite us are more important than those which divide us," he said. "The last four days are perhaps the most exciting and unforgettable in my political life," he said, referring to the first working session of the new parliament. Mr. Mandela said he was prepared to go out of his way to achieve unity and peace in the country, and for this reason he was prepared to meet neo-Nazi leader Eugene Terre-Blanche on Monday. "I will go on my knees for peace in this country," he said.

South pushes back northern forces around Aden U.N. discusses the war

ADEN (Agencies) — Southern Yemeni forces, on the defensive for much of a three-week civil war, have succeeded in pushing back their foes around Aden, the self-declared capital of their breakaway state. The status of the warfront far to the east was not immediately clear, but as of Friday afternoon the northern Yemeni military had made no new claims for two days — a contrast from an earlier barrage of military communiqués. The fall of Aden, declared the capital of South Yemen when the South withdrew from a four-year merger last Saturday, would have been a rich plum psychologically and strategically, enabling the northerners to push east with stronger and better supplied forces. It would have given them control of a refinery and an airport that the South has used with punishing effect to strike at the attackers. But it has not fallen, the southerners instead pushing their rivals back on fronts north and west and apparently holding them at bay east of the scenic port city. Southern soldiers have regained the upper hand in the region of Al Anad base through air raids and an artillery barrage, a southern military spokesman said. "Dozens of dead and wounded northern soldiers were left behind on the battlefield," he said. The southern navy and warplanes went into action on the eastern front to beat back the troops loyal to Sanaa, the spokesman added. Twelve people were wounded in Aden on Thursday by shrapnel from a Soviet-made Luna missile, southern television said. On the diplomatic front, meanwhile, the U.N. Security Council sought ways of brokering a ceasefire in the war despite the North's objections on Friday, as southern forces claimed advances on the battlefield. Britain's ambassador to the United Nations, Sir David Hannay, said the council was considering a resolution or declaration urging the North and South to return to the negotiating table. Saudi Arabia and Oman, both neighbours of Yemen, are at the centre of intensive talks behind the scenes, said

Sir David. They were concerned by the possible effects of the conflict on the region. Oman will take over the council's presidency on Wednesday. The Arab League chief, Esamat Abdul Meguid has informed U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali that the organisation would back any reconciliation bid, although its own efforts have so far failed to have an impact. But President Ali Abdullah Saleh's government in Sanaa has rejected a Saudi proposal for the Security Council to try to end the conflict raging since May 5 through a ceasefire and arms embargo. The North regards international involvement as interference in its internal affairs. In contrast, the proposal was welcomed by the Yemen Democratic Republic (YDR), which was declared last Saturday in the South. Diplomats at the Arab League, said the Saudi initiative at the United Nations, if endorsed, would "freeze the status quo" and keep in place the YDP. For Riyadh, a new division of Yemen would help contain Mr. Saleh and punish the north for its support of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, they said, asking not to be named. Officials and newspapers in both Iran and Iraq have accused Saudi Arabia of stirring up the conflict in Yemen. "Saudi Arabia is afraid of having a strong neighbour at its side," said Iran's deputy speaker of parliament, Hassan Ruhani, Friday. "But fratricide in Yemen is not in the interest of Saudi Arabia or the region." Diplomats in New York also said the Saudis tilted in favour of the south and that a resolution proposed by their ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar Ibn Sultan, was unlikely to be approved without changes. The Saudi text says no solution should be imposed by force and calls for Mr. Ghali to immediately send an envoy to Yemen. Yemen's representative, Abdullah Saleh Al Ashtal, said efforts to reach peace must maintain the unity of his country, which was formed in

(Continued on page 5)

Lebanon seeks S. Council meeting

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon Friday began moves to convene a Security Council session on Israel's abduction of a Shiite guerrilla leader in a weekend commando raid into the eastern Bekaa Valley. Foreign Minister Faris Bweiz met separately with the ambassadors of the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China — the five permanent members of the Security Council to discuss Lebanon's complaint, ministry officials said. They would not give details of the meetings, other than saying they focused on Lebanon's desire to convene the Security Council debate. About 40 Israeli commandos penetrated in two helicopters deep behind Syrian and Lebanese army lines to snatch guerrilla chief Mustafa Dirani from his home in the village of Qsamaba. The daring foray heightened hostilities between Shiite fundamentalists, backed by Iran, and Israeli troops occupying a border enclave in south Lebanon. Guerrillas have since step-

ped up Katyuska rocket attacks and hit-and-run raids on the enclave. Israeli troops have struck back with air and artillery assaults on guerrilla strongholds. The violence overshadowed a Middle East tour by Russian presidential envoy Viktor Posvaliuk to promote Arab-Israeli peace. He wound up a three-day visit to Syria and came Thursday to Beirut, where he held a one-hour meeting with Mr. Bweiz. On Friday, he met with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Mr. Posvaliuk had said after his meeting with Mr. Bweiz he was worried that Dirani's kidnapping would hurt the Arab-Israeli peace talks. "We must remove the obstacles that could obstruct the peace process or create added tension that could hurt the cause of peace," he said. Syria has described the kidnapping as a terrorist act that could hurt efforts to get Israel and its Arab adversaries back to the negotiating table.

(Continued on page 5)

Israel considering barring Arafat from Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Friday he planned steps to make sure that Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) self-rule government is based in Jericho and not moved to Jerusalem in an attempt to assert control over the eastern portion of the city. The concern is that the PLO will attempt to run the autonomous zones of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho from its Jerusalem headquarters, known as Orient House. Alluding to the headquarters, Mr. Rabin said "I have no doubt that over the years some phenomena have taken place in Jerusalem that it would be better if they had not occurred." Mr. Rabin would not give specific details of what would be done to make sure that the declaration of principles, as the Israel-PLO autonomy accord is known, would remain centred in the Jordan Valley oasis. "I believe that we will do

things to ensure that what is written in the declaration of principles, that the Palestinian centre of authority will be in Jericho," Mr. Rabin told Israel radio. The Haaretz daily and Israeli radio reported that security officials proposed to Mr. Rabin at a secret meeting Thursday to restrict PLO actions in east Jerusalem, and even possibly bar PLO chief Yasser Arafat from visiting the city when he travels to the autonomous areas next month. Jerusalem is home to 390,000 Israelis and 160,000 Palestinians most of whom live in the eastern sector captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war. Israel maintains the city is its indivisible capital, while Palestinians also want the eastern portion as capital of their would-be state. Controversy over the city, holy to Islam, Christianity and Judaism has gained an urgency since Jericho and Gaza gained autonomy earlier this month. The international community has never recognised full

Israeli sovereignty. Israelis are worried about losing a part of Jerusalem although the peace agreement with the PLO postpones negotiations over the city for at least two years. The concern has been sparked largely by the Orient House's function as a foreign ministry, with delegation leads by the likes of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and others received there, as well as a city hall for Palestinians. The headquarters is protected by its own security force. In addition, the PLO has established a budget planning office and a housing commission in Jerusalem that will help supervise the autonomous areas. Some concern about Jerusalem also was generated by Mr. Arafat's call at a Johannesburg mosque for a "Jihad" to free Jerusalem. He also disputed Israel's claim to the city. Israel has rejected Mr. Arafat's clarifications that his May 10 speech was not a call for

violence. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres restated Israel's objections to ceding any of Jerusalem should remain "the united Israeli capital under Israeli sovereignty. We will not allow a berlinisation of Jerusalem even if a PLO makes such a decision a thousand times." The city's right-wing dominated council passed a tough resolution Wednesday demanding that the government refuse to negotiate Jerusalem's future. Mr. Rabin met several of his ministers Thursday night to study PLO plans for East Jerusalem such as a university, an economic institute and deploying security men around Orient House, which would have a form of diplomatic immunity, Israeli radio said. The prime minister also met military chiefs who recommended to establish "red lines" in Jerusalem to thwart Palestinian nationalist aspirations, the daily Haaretz said.

(Continued on page 5)

Saudi Arabia says 270 died in Haj stampede

DUBAI (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia said Thursday that 270 Muslim pilgrims were killed in this week's stampede at the annual Haj near the holy city of Mecca in the kingdom.

An official statement, the first on Monday's stampede, said 127 victims had so far been identified. They included Arabs, Africans, Asians and two Europeans.

The statement, carried on the official Saudi Press Agency, said the incident occurred as hundreds of thousands of people crowded at an enclosure at Mina where pilgrims hurl stones at three piles of rocks symbolising the devil.

Mina is 15 kilometres from the holy city of Mecca.

The statement blamed the pilgrims and said their rush to hurl stones and the crowding was impossible to control despite the efforts of policemen and warnings via loudspeakers.

"The crowds of hundreds of thousands... ignored the instructions given to them... They all rushed, hurried to hurl stones at the same time competing to reach the rocks."

"Many of them were carrying their bags on their backs which led to severe crowding... So they started falling and trampling," the statement said.

It said the stampede took place despite the fact that the kingdom had spent billions of dollars on bridges and highways and on expanding holy places to relieve congestion during the annual Haj, which it said 1.5 million Muslims joined this year.

It attacked "those who slander and doubt" what Saudi Arabia had done "for the comfort of pilgrims."

Of the identified victims, it said there were six Saudis, 11 Egyptians, two Sudanese, one Yemeni, six Algerians, one Jordanian, one Moroccan, five Turks, eight Nigerians, 18 Indians, six Bangladeshis, 44 Pakistanis, six Indonesians, one Iranian, one Ghanaian, one Afghan, one Dutch, one person from Mauritius and one from Denmark.

It said the names of the victims would be published in the Saudi Press Agency.

The worst of recent tragedies at the Haj was in 1990, when up to 1,800 people were killed in a stampede in a pedestrian tunnel at Mecca.

In 1987 some 400 people, mostly Iranians, were killed in clashes with Saudi security forces during anti-Western protests.

Saudi Arabia has spent billions of dollars on projects to improve safety and make the pilgrimage more comfortable. It has also imposed quotas on Muslim countries to limit the number of pilgrims and ease overcrowding.

Hundreds of aged or infirm pilgrims die every year during the Haj. Muslims believe a person who dies during it goes straight to heaven.

This year's pilgrimage reached its climax Friday but many pilgrims, dressed in seamless white robes, were still performing rituals in and around the city of Mecca Monday.

It has also seen confrontations between Saudi authorities, who ban all political activity at the Haj, and Iranian pilgrims determined to hold rallies with strongly political themes.

Iranian Radio said Monday that thousands of Iranian pilgrims held a "disavowal of infidels" rally at their tent camp near Mecca, chanting anti-American and anti-Israeli slogans.

Iran's official news agency (IRNA) quoted witnesses as blaming Monday's tragedy on "the inefficiency of Saudi officials."



PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY: Cairo-based Palestinian negotiator Jamil Tarifi (left), PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Hassan Ashrawi attend the first meeting of members of the future Palestinian government of the newly-autonomous territories of the Gaza Strip and Jericho held at the PLO headquarters in Tunis. Seventeen of the 19 members so far named to serve on the 24-strong Palestinian National Authority were spotted before the start of the meeting (AFP photo)

In Gaza after the party — the hangover?

By Robert Mahoney
Reuter

GAZA — The party is almost over. The Israelis left a week ago under a final shower of intifada stones, touching off an explosion of joy.

Gazans are still savouring the novelty of freedom from occupation and curfews by dancing at midnight barbecues along a Mediterranean coast festooned for the first time in six years with lighted fishing boats.

Men and boys ask to hold the AK-47 rifles of the still smiling Palestine Liberation Army soldiers who have arrived to police them.

Shops and restaurants are open all hours.

But many of the Gazans who stroll past cannot afford to buy. The problems of 27 years of occupation — poverty, economic stagnation and withered institutions — have not disappeared and the Palestinians have barely begun to tackle them.

Israel gave the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) the keys to the Gaza Strip and Jericho but so far it has done little with them.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat has sent in his police and security chiefs but the political leadership is still in Tunis.

There is, no doubt, a vacuum," Rashid Abu Shbak, a senior PLO official recently returned to Gaza, said.

"All the security and civil departments of the (former Israeli) civil administration have been dropped on the shoulders of the Palestinians... most Palestinian cadres do not have enough experience nor the details of how to run it properly yet," he told Reuters.

"But despite that the (Palestinian) authority has started taking measures... we are working to fill the gap," said Abu Shbak, a fugitive from the Israeli army during the uprising who is now a liaison between the PLO and Israel.

Other PLO officials too, like chief transition coordinator Jamil Tarifi, deny the PLO is ill-prepared for governing the one million residents of Gaza and Jericho.

"More than 13,000 Palestinians ran the civil administration with about only 120 Israelis as bosses," he said.

Services like health and education have been carried on under their own momentum, but departments which were under strict Israeli control, like the interior and tax departments, are barely working.

The Gaza Tax Office, which will levy income tax for the cash-strapped authority, is due to open Wednesday, Abu Shbak said. Israel will pay civil servants' salaries until the end of May then the PLO will have to find the money.

Promised funds from Western donors anxious for accountability have so far only trickled in. Most have gone to the police.

"The United States will pay \$5 million this week and Norway has already paid \$2 million," Abu Shbak said.

Mr. Arafat's aid Nabil Shaath came from Cairo last week to hand out \$50 to each policeman for the Muslim feast of 'Eid Al Adha.

"Our first priority is to offer security and safety," Abu Shbak said.

"Our second priority is to offer bread to the people," Abu Shbak added. He agreed the two were linked because Israel is against preventing Gazans from crossing to work in the Jewish state because of an attack on Israelis last Friday.

"Providing work is probably the biggest problem facing the authority," Abu Shbak said.

Palestinian economists acknowledge privately that the new leaders may not be willing to disappoint Gazans' rising expectations and take the painful economic decisions needed to turn the economy around.

"Arafat may come in June and hand out dollars to buy allegiance. Such quick-fix solutions could ruin us," one economist said.

But Abu Shbak is less pessimistic.

"It is not new that Israel keeps harping on about our inability to take over, but Palestinians have built up many countries (in the Gulf). Universities in the United States and Europe have many Palestinian professors. We are a qualified people but it will take time."

"The national authority will not be able to build a state in days, even Arafat knows he cannot wave a magic wand to erase the scars of the occupation."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Flesh-eating bug kills one in Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The flesh-eating bacterium which has struck Britain killed a woman in northern Israel but another Israeli was saved by having a leg amputated, hospitals said Friday. Hospital officials said the woman in the town of Afula died within 24 hours of catching the gangrene-like infection, Group A Streptococci, two months ago. Another woman, infected in the leg, was amputated and survived on a heavy dose of antibiotics. The Health Ministry said around 20 cases were reported in Israel each year, and reassured the public there was no epidemic. Fifteen people across Britain have been infected by the mutant flesh-eating bacterium this year and 11 are known to have died from it, British health authorities said Thursday. Cases of the killer bug have been on the increase around the world over the past five years, according to the World Health Organisation.

Ethiopia launches huge aid operation

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopia has launched a massive operation involving thousands of trucks and some aircraft to shuttle relief supplies to drought-affected areas. The Transport and Communications Ministry said Thursday that over 3,000 heavy trucks and several planes and helicopters were deployed in a one-month operation to ferry relief assistance to drought-stricken districts. "The operation is part of a one-month national plan aimed at transporting 134,000 tonnes of food, 25,000 tonnes of fertilisers, 7,000 tonnes of seed as well as medicines from ports and other surplus production areas to areas affected by drought," the ministry said in a statement. It added that the food would be airlifted to areas which were inaccessible by road. The office of Ethiopia's prime minister said up to 7.5 million people were affected by famine. Government officials have previously put the figure at 6.7 million. Donors have pledged up to 80 per cent of about a million tonnes of food aid required but delays in delivery have created grave concern, government officials said. Ethiopia has faced some serious famine problems in the past, including the 1984-85 famine that aroused global concern.

Fire destroys 11 houses in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Almost two dozen people were hospitalised Thursday after fire destroyed their homes in Qeleen, a town of northern Egypt, a newspaper reported Friday. A container of butane gas used as fuel exploded in Al Shahath Al Hennawy's house, and the fire it caused spread to 10 other dwellings, the daily Al Gomhuria said. Qeleen lies in the Nile Delta 75 miles (120 kilometres) northwest of Cairo. The town's fire-fighting squad called in reinforcements from nearby towns because it was unable to put out the flames. The fire burned for five hours and caused property losses estimated at \$75,000 (250,000 Egyptian pounds).

Amnesty calls for release of Vanunu

TEL AVIV (AP) — Amnesty International called on Israel to release nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, held in solitary confinement for revealing information on Israel's nuclear programme. Vanunu should be freed "as redress for violations of his human rights," the London-based group said in a statement. Amnesty International has said it considers Vanunu's prolonged solitary confinement "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment." The group stopped short of declaring Vanunu a prisoner of conscience. Israel's Justice Ministry declined to comment. Vanunu, a former employee at the Dimona nuclear facility, was sentenced to 18 years in prison in 1986 after being convicted of treason for divulging Israeli nuclear secrets to the Sunday Times of London. His information suggested Israel had stockpiled at least 100 nuclear weapons, or the world's sixth largest atomic arsenal. Vanunu was believed to have been captured by Israeli secret servicemen when he disappeared in London in mysterious circumstances shortly after the story was published in September 1986. The Supreme Court last year turned down appeals of Vanunu's conviction and appeals on the condition of his detention.

Lebanon cracks down on porn prostitutes

BEIRUT (R) — Authorities seized 300 pornographic videos and shut 14 cinemas in a week-long public morals drive, the chief of Lebanon's Morals Brigade said Friday. Police Major Antoine Chakkour said the brigade was also combatting a wave of prostitution, homosexuality and sexual offences against minors, and working with private social organisations running rehabilitation programmes. Maj. Chakkour said rising sexual offences resulted from poverty, family problems and population displacements caused by the 1975-90 civil war. Thousands of civil war refugees still live in squalor as squatters in bombed out buildings. Information Minister Michel Samaha announced Wednesday a simultaneous drive against broadcasts of uncensored audiovisual materials and pirating of copyright materials. In a memorandum to take effect on July 1 he banned broadcasts or rental of cassettes, recordings or films without consent of their legal owners and prior screening by the official censor at General Security (police) Headquarters. The regulations revive rules introduced in 1947 and 1959 to prevent piracy of copyright material and broadcasts offensive to morals and religious sensitivities which fell into abeyance during the civil war.

Istanbul bridge to reopen

ISTANBUL (AFP) — The Galata Bridge across the Golden Horn waterway in Istanbul, which was partially destroyed in a fire in 1992, will reopen to traffic Sunday after being rebuilt further upstream. Istanbul city officials said. The old two-tier bridge, built in 1912 at the mouth of the Golden Horn, was one of the city's main tourist attractions. The bridge has been restored at a cost of \$4.6 million but has been moved upstream between Haskoy and Balat, the city's former Jewish quarter. The old Galata Bridge which was 462 metres in length and 25 in width had two tiers, the upper one housing restaurants and cafes. The restored bridge has none of these attractions and is outside the main tourist circuit.

Sudan intensifies Yemen evacuation moves

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has stepped up efforts to evacuate several hundred of its nationals remaining in Yemen.

The government last week repatriated 724 Sudanese from Yemen by ship and the English-language newspaper New Horizon said Friday that more were on their way.

The paper said none of the Sudanese in Yemen had been harmed but a committee formed by the government to study the situation has proposed sending a medical team to care for returnees.

Sudan Airways has expressed its readiness to transport medical teams and equipment to Erit Sudan and Kofu there to Yemen.

Reports from Yemen say many Sudanese working there want to go home but are reluctant to leave personal belongings behind.

The government has said priority is being given to the transportation of people rather than property.

Meanwhile Sudan has come close to openly taking sides in the civil war between north and south Yemen, separate states which unified four years ago.

Sudan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement Thursday reasserting Sudan's absolute support for Yemeni unity, in line with the views of North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Caution counters S. Yemenis reasons for recognition

By Ashraf Fouad
Reuter

ADEN — Embroiled in civil war with northern foes, south Yemen's former Marxist leaders are saying all the right things to win the international recognition that could have a marked effect on the conflict.

They advocate democracy, free markets and human rights. They plan to create a free trade zone to make their corner of the Arabian peninsula even more economically viable.

But despite their statements and the breakaway state's natural resources — a promising oil industry with 1.9 billion barrel oil reserves, scenic coastline and a tiny population of 2.4 million in an area half the size of France — no country has yet recognised the Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Born of last Saturday's secession of the south from a four-year-old union with the conservative, mountainous north, the new state has won recognition only from Somalia, a breakaway region of Somalia that no other state acknowledges.

Few countries have announced their stance either way, despite perceived sympathy in the Arab world for the southerners. Arab unity is still held up as an ideal and there is a reluctance to be seen supporting secession.

Egypt, though sharply critical of the northern offensive, has said it was too early to recognise the self-declared state.

The United States also announced it had decided against recognising the south in the heat of battle.

Southerners portray the three-week-old war as one between an "outward-looking, secular and democratic south eager to move into the 21st century, and a backward, tribal, Muslim extremist north ruled by a military dictatorship that would like to take the whole Arabian peninsula back to the middle ages."

Ali Salem Al Beidh, president of the new state, used to rule the former Marxist South Yemen before its 1990 merger with the north in his capacity as leader of the Yemen Socialist Party, once a dour cold war era disciple of Moscow.

Asked why Yemenis and foreign powers should believe that he would not restore his previous iron fist rule, he said: "The whole world changed and we are part of this world... The phenomenon of the era (democracy) is the road we have taken."

Mr. Beidh said free multi-party general and municipal elections would be held next May to replace a hurriedly-appointed temporary national salvation parliament.

Aden would also protect the interests of foreign countries doing business within the borders of former South Yemen.

Recognition would give the southerners more diplomatic clout in their efforts to end the fighting, on their terms, against northern troops who have entered southern areas. Any state recognising the south would in effect brand the army of northern President Ali Abdullah Saleh as an occupation force.

The main city of Aden has long dreamed of transforming itself into a free trade centre. It was meant to be the economic capital of united Yemen and planned a free zone on the important international shipping lane close to the Red Sea entrance.

The potential business led to the start of the construction of office buildings for several foreign firms, modern shopping malls and residential complexes overlooking sandy beaches.

But the work stopped when the fighting started.

Several international hotel chains overlooking spectacular beaches have also been allocated ideal property to serve business travellers and tourists.

"This country does not need oil to make it. It can make it by exporting seafood alone," said businessman Samir Saleh. "The world's best lobster are right there," he added pointing at reefs at the eastern port of Mukalla in Hadramawt.

He and four tonnes of lobsters at \$21 a kg (2.2 pounds) have been stranded in Mukalla since May 3, looking for a flight to transport the cargo to France.

Mr. Saleh is a southerner who fled during the heyday of Marxism and the seizure of private property by the state, but returned after unity to start a seafood export business. He has already sent two shipments of 10.5 tonnes and six tonnes to Europe.

Southerners are proud of the war of liberation to expel British forces but they also say Britain had taught them a lot — discipline, sound government management and organisation.

Foreign residents in Aden say the institutions of the former southern state crumbled after unity, with chaos and corruption increasing in government.

Southerners also blame the north for sanctioning the daily chewing of the qat narcotic leaf which is even consumed by soldiers at the front. By tradition Yemenis chew qat from after lunch until late in the evening.

"Before unity, we were only allowed qat on Thursdays and Fridays (the Muslim normal weekend), and if you were caught the sentence was six months in prison," said a southern government employee.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Le Monde Sous Marin
18:30 Dossier De La Semaine
19:00 News in French
19:05 Ushuaia
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
21:00 Varieties
21:30 The Campbells
22:00 News in English
22:00 Feature Film
22:20 "Family Plot"

PRAYER TIMES

03:55 Fajr
05:26 Sunrise (Sunrise) Duha
12:33 Dhuhr
13:37 Asr
19:37 Maghreb
21:10 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetleth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285
St. Joseph Church Tel 624591
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 601757
Terrence Church Tel. 623466

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625441

Anglican Church Tel. 60851, Tel. 625443
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624528
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 64195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675491
The Evangelical Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The weather conditions will prevail with winds northwesterly light to moderate. In Amman, it will be very hot with winds northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp. 21/33
Amman 26/40
Dead Sea 16/35
Jordan Valley 23/39

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 35, Aqaba 41 Humidity readings: Amman 15 per cent, Aqaba 31 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Walid Isah 675485
Dr. Mustafa Harrahil 826124
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairook pharmacy 628672
Al Salam pharmacy 637291
Yacoub pharmacy 643435
Shameban pharmacy 637661
Najm pharmacy 847032

(RBID):
Dr. Akram Minmani 248974
Amman 26/40
ZARQA:
Dr. Rabea Atallah 984424
Khaleel pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896391
Public Security Department 600251
Hotel Complaints 665081
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 661176
Complaints 767111
Telephone Information (Directory assistance) 121
Police Calls 1010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Arabic Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680101
Jordan Power 815615
Electricity Authority 815615
Companies
RJ Flight Information 98-53281
Queen Alia Int. Airport 18-53281

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/302
Khaleel Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Khaleel Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmevan 660131
Shmevan Hospital 660131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Muassil Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Adhail 666166
Al-Ahli, Adhail 666166
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511/26
Army, Amman 8916115
Queen Alia Hospital 6024051
Amal Hospital 674155
Zarga Govt. Hospital 09983323
Queen Alia Hospital 09983323
Zarga National Hospital 09983323
Inn Sima Hospital 09983323
Al Bahaa Modern Hospital 09983323
RBID:
Prince Basha Hospital 01215555
Greek Catholic Hospital 01212780
Bn Al-Malou Hospital 01212780
AQABA:
Prince Haya Hospital 10311411

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department or the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 09932781-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
05:30 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
06:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:45 New Delhi (RJ)
10:25 Aqaba (RJ)
10:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
10:35 Dhahran (RJ)
16:45 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
18:00 Beirut (RJ)
18:00 Colombo (RJ)
18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:45 Amsterdam (add) (RJ)
17:55 Cairo (RJ)
18:20 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:30 London, Berlin (RJ)
21:25 London (add) (RJ)
23:30 Brussels (add) (RJ)
23:45 Paris (add) (RJ)
02:45 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Vienna (OA)
15:45 Rome (IAZ)
19:45 Dubai (EM)
20:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:25 Amsterdam (KL)
00:35 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
07:00 Beirut (RJ)
08:00 Aqaba (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:35 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:45 Cucumbers (large) 150/100
12:45 Cucumbers (small) 300/200
12:45 Eggplant 260/200
13:55 Cairo (RJ)
14:00 London (RJ)
14:05 Larnaca (RJ)
18:00 Beirut (RJ)
21:30 Bahrain, Dubai (RJ)
21:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:30 Damascus (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
05:30 London (RJ)
05:30 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
09:15 Beirut (ME)
13:50 Vienna (OA)
20:45 Dubai (EM)
23:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:25 Amsterdam (KL)

HIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 550/650
Banana (Mukammal) 600
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 220/180
Carrot 350/270
Cauliflower 350/250
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 300/200
Eggplant 260/200
Garlic 600/400
Green beans 500/400
Lemon 220/120
Marrow (large) 280/200
Marrow (small) 500/400
Mulukhiyah 240/140
Onion 400/200
Orange 150/100
Peas 480/320
Pepper (hot) 300/200
Pepper (sweet) 350/250
Potato 450/350
Tomato 300/200
String beans 650/500
Watermelon 300/200
Vine Leaves 450/450

هنا نحن الوطن

King receives condolences

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday received cables of condolences over the passing of Princess Saleha. The cables were sent by Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, Sheikh Issa Ben Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. Directors of the public security, general intelligence and civil defence departments also sent cables.

JEA announces plans to boost Aqaba station

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) has announced plans for the installation of two electrical generating units at its Aqaba Thermal Power Station starting in 1994.

A JEA statement said tenders for the project have been announced and will be received and opened during the first week of July with the intention of placing contracts by the end of 1994 in order to complete the extension project by 1997.

The present output from the station is 260 megawatts (MW) with the new units the capacity will be increased to 520 MW, said the statement.

According to the statement, the extension of the power plant in Aqaba, together with a strengthening of the transmission system to Amman, will provide a stable power supply for an expanding Jordanian economy to the end of the century.

Earlier this month the JEA announced that a committee was preparing the groundwork to convert the status of the JEA from an autonomous authority into a commercial entity operating under the Companies Law.

The proposed change of status comes in line with a recommendation by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



INAUGURAL FLIGHT. Qatar Airways Friday launches its Amman-Doha route from Queen Alia International Airport. Attending the inaugural ceremony were Qatar Airways Director General Sheikh Hamad Bin Ali Al Thani, Minister of Transport Aqab Hulusa, senior officials of Royal Jordanian (RJ), the Ministry of Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority, as well as the Qatari ambassador to Jordan and the Qatar Airways agent in Amman (Petra photo)

Prince Hassan calls for council

(Continued from page 1)

hand, and the seemingly unstoppable march of development on the other, were thought likely to wash away such outdated and atavistic notions. This has not been the case. While it is true that strategic superpower interests largely subsumed these notions during the cold war, they have re-emerged powerfully with the ending of the war. It is clear that a reassessment is in order; and the predicament of Europe's minorities would seem a suitable starting point.

The problems of communal coexistence are complex indeed, despite the best will of those who seek true multiculturalism. Practical issues of everyday life demand delineation and a definition of attitudes. Religious minorities have continued to labour under medieval perceptions in European societies, while they have sometimes been bent on insulating themselves against the encroachment of European values on their traditional modes. The roles of the extended family, males and females, arranged and inter-communal marriages, education and religious instruction, have all been questioned. The children of immigrants, especially those born in Europe, have become discriminated in a society which sometimes appears to them laden with inherent contradictions. The conflict between their immediate cultural milieu and the broader societal framework has often set them apart from their contemporaries. This predicament will certainly be familiar to European Jews.

For the six million Muslims of Europe, the picture is strikingly similar. Through a process of settlement, conversion and more recently economic migration, most European countries host significant Muslim minorities. A sense of alienation became dominant as the Muslim communities of Europe, feeling marginal and vulnerable, grew during the latter part of this century. The Rushdie affair and the Gulf War strengthened the tendency of the Muslim communities to view themselves as beleaguered, and of Europeans to see them as a threat.

The situation has been compounded by the tragedy that is still being relentlessly played out in the Balkans. Reports of unprecedented atrocities have inflamed public opinion throughout the Islamic World, while adherents of other faiths have not been immune to the violence of religious and cultural intolerance. I have been to the area of conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and have seen the destruction of both Christian and Muslim holy sites. This must not be allowed to continue, for the deadly results of

prejudice and alienation are all too familiar. It has been demonstrated, time and again, that appeasement pays the aggressor a handsome dividend. It is imperative that humanitarian aid should not become a substitute for human rights, especially the right to the security of life. On this point above all others, our religious beliefs converge. It is worth noting that on the question of Bosnia, many of the loudest voices of sanity and humanitarianism have been Jewish.

The end of the cold war has had other ramifications for European Muslims. With the possibility of global communism by now a distant memory, there is a vacuum of clearly identifiable enemies. The dogmatic exhortations of religious extremists, coupled with the drive of some Muslim states to acquire nuclear weapons, has given some commentators a fresh target: the so-called Islamic threat.

Their purpose appears to be the portrayal of Islam and its adherents as a danger to world security. The result has been an intensification of Muslim indignation; for at a time when 80 per cent of the world's refugees are Muslim, it seems inappropriate at best to portray Islam as a major threat to world security. In addition, neither religious extremism nor the desire for nuclear weapons is peculiar to Islam, but occur in all areas of the world.

However, this is not to deny that there are deep currents in the Muslim World seeking a reorientation in the modern world. These currents may be felt at all levels of Muslim society. Islam is a broad faith, and there are many divergent notions of what Islam entails, and what its implications for political organisation may be. The most visible manifestation of resurgent religion in the Muslim World is known in the West as fundamentalism. Media portrayals notwithstanding, this tendency is by no means the only strand of dynamic Muslim socio-political culture.

It should be made clear that the term fundamentalism is of itself a misnomer and that Muslims do not comprise a homogeneous body and that Islam is no monolith. However, so-called fundamentalism does arise out of a dichotomy shared by all peoples of a rich spiritual heritage. The problem centres on the quest to achieve a viable synthesis between compliance with the basic demands of the faith on the one hand, and the requirements of contemporary life on the other. Attempts have been made to fuse these divergent needs to establish a consensus governing the presence of Muslim communities in European societies.

Such societies are generally pluralist in social composition and democratic in political procedures. The integration of Muslim communities can thus take place only on the basis of their acknowledgement of the prevailing rule of law. They must accept the authority of the state without prejudicing their religious beliefs. The principles of Islam itself require a Muslim minority to obey and support a state in which it has taken residence, in the same way that a Muslim state expects non-Muslims to respect their state and abide by its laws. The Muslims of Europe, in common with other religious minorities, should not have or expect special privileges; but by the same token, they should not suffer discrimination.

Cooperation between the national authorities and their Muslim communities is essential to the success of this enterprise. Democratic and legal procedures are flexible enough to accommodate basic Muslim demands. Law reform rather than law breaking is the way to achieve this end. There is no reason why some legal problems between Muslims, especially those concerning matters of personal status, can be resolved through the application of religious principles and values within a European legal-cultural context. And in education, the study of religion can be more than a curriculum subject providing religious instruction; it can emphasise the importance of common spiritual pursuits in a highly materialistic society.

Furthermore, the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into the national laws of all European states would be a great step forward. Freedom of religion would then form an integral part of national legal frameworks. It is also vital to outlaw religious discrimination, on the same grounds as racial or sexual discrimination. In pluralist European countries it may be possible to extend the crime of incitement to racial hatred to cover religious antagonism. Such measures would help safeguard the position of Muslims in Europe, ensure their complete integration, and guarantee the supremacy of the rule of law. Whatever happens, every effort must be exerted to avert the emergence of European xenophobia where the notion of fortress Europe reigns supreme.

There are five chief areas in which men and women of good will can work together to help the process of integration and understanding. Through the channels of the media, in the educational system, with the moral force and sanctions of

the law, via the work of religious bodies, and finally through political and institutional leadership, a broad range of measures can be devised to tackle the blight of intolerance, discrimination and inter-communal violence. A body such as this, with its access and influence in all of these channels, plays a vital role. I would like to suggest that a parallel organisation might be set up to tackle the phenomenon of Islamophobia. I would call upon all the parliamentarians present to consider the formation of such a council, perhaps in coordination with the community leaders of their constituencies. Your combined international membership and experience would prove an invaluable resource in combating Islamophobia.

I would also like, by way of example, to highlight another approach that includes most of these channels. At St. James's Palace yesterday, an Inter-Faith Declaration on a Code of Business Ethics was publicly launched. This followed a series of consultations under the patronage of the Duke of Edinburgh. Sir Evelyn de Rothschild and myself. Followers of the three monotheistic faiths — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — took part, to deliberate on topics of common interest. Theologians, academics and prominent figures active in business and government were all involved. The participants worked to dispel misconceptions, to go beyond the easy stereotype, to achieve a real dialogue on the basis of their shared moral, ethical and spiritual values. Despite early difficulties, our efforts culminated into consensus on a variety of issues.

One of the many tasks undertaken by these consultations has been the formulation of an Inter-Faith Code of Ethics for international business. Discussion of the terms of the code began in 1988, and was concluded last October. I do not believe that this Code of Ethics will bring lasting harmony between members of the various faith communities involved. But I do believe that it illustrates just how much common ground there is between our traditions, and how much can be achieved when one's intentions are sincere. It provides an example of coordinated action, and apart from any improvements it may bring to the conduct of business, should send a clear signal of common cause to Muslims, Christians and Jews alike. In the context of the search for

peace and reconciliation in the Middle East, such an initiative stands as testimony to the possibility of, in Rabbi Anshur Hertzberg's words, replacing "the litany of victimisation and 'chosenness'... by accommodation and compromise."

On a broader level, the Code of Ethics, in common with inter-faith declarations such as the Global Ethic agreed by the Parliament of the World's Religions, and inter-faith organisations such as the Calamus and Maimonides Foundations, points the way towards a new thinking for the 21st century and beyond. Such a thinking can see the inter-connections and inter-dependence between peoples, cultures and religions, while respecting their diversity. It seeks to develop the vision to identify and build upon common fundamentals. It does not ask us to abandon our cultural baggage, but merely to recognise it for what it is.

It is often said that the foundation of peace is justice; but what is justice? It has been defined as "treating like cases alike, and different cases differently." The key to justice lies in our definitions of "like" and "different." Injustice is perceived, and conflict results, when the gap between "self" and "other" seems to be larger than the common ground. Human rights abuses most often occur when a fundamental and threatening difference is perceived between the victim and the perpetrator. The split between subject and object is thus at the root of all oppositions, all polarities, all conflicts. Peace, then, is a dynamic state of mutual inter-connection in which notions of "self" and "other" are sufficiently broad that individuals are able to identify and empathise with one another across the divides created by culture and ideology. It is, perhaps, at this level that we must most of all work, for without understanding of these basic ideas, any number of practical initiatives will surely fail.

I would like to end by commending the Inter-Parliamentary Council Against Antisemitism for its efforts over the years; to leave you with the thought that a parallel organisation to combat Islamophobia would represent a substantial advance for the six million Muslims of Europe; and to urge the parliamentarians among you once again to consider its formation.

Thank you all for your attention.

Worst heat wave in 54 years to taper off — meteorologist

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The heat wave which has persisted in the area for 12 days will Saturday begin tapering off, although temperatures will remain slightly above their annual average, according to Department of Meteorology Director Ali Abanda.

Dr. Abanda told the Jordan Times Friday that temperatures will decrease gradually because Jordan is still affected by a "thermal low pressure" centred over northern Saudi Arabia and the Red Sea.

According to Dr. Abanda, heat wave is indicated when temperatures exceed the annual average by 5° for a continuous period of more than five days.

Temperatures in May normally do not rise above 28° but they have been hovering between 32°C and 36°C since May 17, according to Dr. Abanda.

He said Jordan has not witnessed a heat spell such as this in 54 years, adding that there have been several cases of citizens suffering from sun stroke, and brush fires were reported in a number of regions.

The 1939 heat wave saw temperatures rise in May from 34°C to 40°C, but it was several days shorter than the current spell.

Meanwhile, the olive harvest in Jordan is expected to be adversely affected by the severe heat, according to Khalil Jurun, head of the Horticulture Department at the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr. Jurun said farmers



Bathers enjoy the warm waters of Ma'in waterfall (file photo)

who have been counting on this year's harvest to make up for their losses from the poor harvest last year, will be disappointed because the khamasinic conditions accompanied by the heat wave and high winds have hindered the olive-growing process.

The areas most affected, Mr. Jurun said, are between the Jordan Valley and the

highlands, adding that trees on the higher mountains were least affected.

Olive oil is considered a valuable commodity and there is a great demand for it in the local market.

According to the Department of Meteorology temperatures were expected to rise to no more than 31°C on Saturday in the Amman area.

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ABS has vacancies for a special one-year course that will provide students with a unique opportunity to acquire the academic skills necessary to join the challenging 2 year I.B. course.

The I.B. curriculum starts at the Amman Baccalaureate School in grade 11. It is a very well-organised, two-year, pre-university course of studies preferred by college and university admission offices throughout the world. I.B. courses rely more on analytical and reasoning skills rather than just the knowledge of subject content.

Therefore, ABS is offering this special transitional year to give students a chance to acquire the essential skills in each subject area that will be required for an I.B. programme.

At the completion of this special 'bridge' year students may choose to sit for up to four 'core' IGCSE (Cambridge) examinations including: English, Arabic, Mathematics, and possibly French.

In all other subject areas ABS will be offering appropriate school-based courses that are especially designed to meet both the pre-I.B. as well as Tawjihi equivalence requirements. These subjects will include: Combined Science, History, Geography and Economics, as well as Art, Computer Skills and Religion.

On successful completion of this one year course students will be eligible to enter the two year I.B. programme, or Tawjihi Science stream.

For more information, please contact Mrs. Munira El Jundi, the school registrar, telephone no. 845572, 847191

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

LECTURE

★ Lecture in English entitled "The History of Arabic Silver Jewelry" by Ms. Hana Sadeq Beraudo at Goethe-Institut at 7:00 p.m.

STORY RECITAL

★ Story recital by Dr. Hind Abul Sha'r at the Jordan Writers Association at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Installation entitled "Ephemeric of a Circle" by artist Noel Favreliere at Darat Al

Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweideh at 5:00 p.m. Tel. 643251/2.

★ Exhibition of paintings by disabled children at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of paintings by 20 Jordanian and Iraqi artists (including Widad Orfall, Hussein Da'seb, Waddah Al Ward, Adnan Al Hili and Mahmoud Hussein) at Orfall Art Gallery in Umm Uthaina (Tel. 826932).

★ Exhibition by 46 artists entitled "He, Monsieur La Fontaine" at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of water colour paintings by artist Itab Hreilb and another exhibition of ceramics by Sajida Al Mashaikil at Ain Art Gallery in Wadi Saqra (Tel. 644451, 652823).

★ Exhibition by artist Helmi El-Touni at Beldan Art Gallery (Tel. 687598).

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1973.

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Two faiths, one enemy

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan's speech before the Inter-Parliamentary Council against Antisemitism in London Thursday was a timely reminder that the problems of racism, discrimination and intolerance are still with us despite all efforts to eradicate them. After reminding his audience that Islam is a religion of tolerance, the Crown Prince sought to bring to the attention of his audience the fact that Muslims are increasingly being subjected to discrimination and intolerance in western Europe, presumably a continent with an impeccable human rights record.

To rectify this situation that has been made worse by the media's continued portrayal of Islam as a threat to the West, Prince Hassan has proposed the creation of a parliamentary council to combat "Islamophobia" to work and function in parallel with the Council against Antisemitism of which he is a member.

We can only support this call for the ending of double standards in the application of human rights principles and warn that in spite of the countless human rights instruments and conventions, religious discrimination and intolerance, like ethnic racism have been on the rise everywhere.

The Crown Prince had ample ammunition to support his thesis that the international scene is replete with evidence that the tide of discrimination is still in full swing. From ethnic cleansing in rump Yugoslavia to ethnic and tribal warfare in Rwanda, the evidence is overwhelming that the phenomenon of discrimination is rampant everywhere one looks.

In this vein, we believe that the right place to begin the struggle against discrimination and intolerance is in the minds and hearts of men and women. That is where the struggle has to start, and unless the international community takes up this challenge there can be no hope to check the tide of discrimination and intolerance. Education and media campaigning have a leading role in the effort to eradicate discrimination. But there are other tools that are available to complement the function of education. Highlighting Islamophobia through the creation of international institutions to combat it could also be the right way to initiate the coordinated effort against all forms of discrimination and stereotyping.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily welcomed signs of possible negotiations between the leaders in Sanaa and Aden following weeks of fighting that left a trail of destruction and death. Reports about readiness on the part of the two sides to start talks are considered the first important diplomatic development in Yemen in weeks, and could usher in a new era that would put a final end to the sufferings of the population, said the daily. It is a welcome step on the part of third Yemeni parties to take the initiative and call for a truce and the start of negotiations despite the difficulties, said the paper. But the most important thing at the moment, it added, is to get the two sides to start talking peace and find ways to protect their unity and their national gains away from selfish interests and weapons.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily expressed the belief that Turkey will soon take a unilateral step and end the sanctions imposed on Iraq. Indeed Ankara has already declared that it was opening its borders and trade with Iraq and intends to use the oil trapped in the pipelines from the oil fields in Iraq to Turkish ports, said Tareq Masarweh. The writer said that Ankara is under pressure to take this step in view of its huge economic losses as a result of the sanctions on the one hand and the pressure of the Kurds in the eastern regions on the other. The writer said that it is said to see Kuwaiti delegations touring Western capitals demanding the continuation of the sanctions on Iraq and to hear calls by some Arab capitals to retain the embargo in order to protect the current rate of oil prices on the world markets, said the writer. The writer said that while Turkey is concerned over the interests of its own people, some Arab regimes are concerned over causing harm to their kinsmen.

JORDANIAN PERSPECTIVE

Victims of a global game

FARIS IS a Bosnian journalist who few weeks ago took part in the conference sponsored by the International Parisians against Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ICGPG), which was held in Brussels. He was not the typical overexcited propagandist we usually meet on such occasions. He and his Bosnian wife Malika were rational, objective, combative and sincere. His remarks and ideas justify some elaborations here.

The Balkan area has for centuries been an explosive powder keg, the mishandling of which would result in many acts of genocide and carnage. It is not only the question of four million Bosnians facing a mightier, 12-million enemy, like the Serbs who are four times superior in their military experience as professional officers or in army equipment, or in their loyalty to the concept of Greater Serbia with 30 million citizens all over other parts of Europe. Moreover it is not the question of peasant Muslims standing against organised foes who acquired their fighting skills since they fought the Nazis under the command of British officers and who carried on the same military Spartan tradition under Marshal Josip Broz Tito when they, as ethnic Serbs, staffed the entire Yugoslav air force, the entire army officers corps and senior artillery and communication posts.

The problem, to Faris, lies in the entente cordiale which continued between the old patrons and the new generations of Serbs who, though turned Communists, still retain, their chauvinistic national ego as they pride themselves in maintaining a tradition of independence since 1389 when Turkey recognised them as a vassal principality, and since 1878 when they became a recognised sovereign kingdom in accordance with the Treaty of Berlin; and since one Serb managed to assassinate in June 28, 1914 the Austrian-Archduke Ferdinand and thus provided the pretext for World War I, which started with one million soldiers each of Britain, France, Austria and Russia. The German army of Wilhelm II was the strongest European army then, with two million soldiers.

It is this feeling of being abandoned by all the main global protagonists that worries many Bosnians like Faris. They easily jump to conclusions (which might be mistaken) that the Catholic Croats managed to find immediate support from both

the Holy See and Italy and France, which has the biggest military contingent in the fields, providing real protection to all Croatian villages and boundary lines, the way Maj. Gen. Philippe Morillon arranged it. Even some of the Muslim battalions there, like that of Maj. Gen. Abdul Razek, are actually helpless under orders from U.N. Secretary General Butros Gbali and British officers operating within the United Nations command (UNPROFOR).

"Due to this Arab apathy and international carelessness, we Bosnians had fifty thousand Muslim girls raped, two hundred thousand killed and two million Bosnians became displaced and refugees" — a Bosnian journalist

Faris carries on to explain how the Orthodox majority in former Yugoslavia enjoys the funding and moral support of their coreligionists in Cyprus, Greece and Russia. The Russian stand was very much in favour of the Orthodox Serbs. Many shipments of fuel, arms and ammunitions found their way easily to the Serbs in spite of the ostensible embargo on that territory.

Faris refers to a statement on Feb. 10, 1994 by the Russian deputy prime-minister warning that Russia would not tolerate any NATO intervention against Serbia, and that it would be convening an urgent meeting of the U.N. Security Council to that effect.

Earlier to that, a stronger statement came on Feb. 7, 1994 from presidential adviser Andranik Migranyan who said: "A strike against Serbia can prove to be strike against Russia. It is a mistake to believe that Vladimir Zhirinovskiy is alone in his pro-Serbian position."

Moreover, the Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said that should the world move in favour of Bosnia, Russia

would look to the "ethnic cleansing" against Russian citizens (allegedly) taking place in the Baltic states.

Faris is sure that there is a deliberate attempt to wipe out Muslims in Bosnia. He says certain European powers do not want a Muslim state within the exclusive elitist club of European Christians. Those European powers and the United Nations Security Council, which they control, want Bosnia destroyed. The strategy they followed to achieve that target was to impose an arms embargo on the Muslims so that they cannot defend themselves against aggressors and invaders.

On Sept. 25, 1991, the Security Council adopted Resolution 713 implementing "a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment."

The four million Muslims, this way, were reduced to the state of being defenceless and unarmed victims. The United Nations, and all the military contingents within UNPROFOR became the watchdog that made sure that the Muslim victims had no way to defending themselves.

Due to this Arab apathy and international carelessness, Faris says, we Bosnians had fifty thousand Muslim girls raped, two hundred thousand killed and two million Bosnians became displaced and refugees.

"Serbian war criminal Radovan Karadzic, weeks before starting the acts of genocide, told the Bosnian people: Nobody is going to help you. Greater Serbia will be created. In this mandate, even God is a Serb."

For the first time in history, the United Nations is preventing a legitimate member from arming itself against the onslaught of a country, "Serbia", that has been kicked out of the United Nations.

It is high time to lift the arms embargo against Bosnian Muslims. The United States, which provides 40 per cent of the U.N. budget, can contribute to lifting the U.N. sanctioning of Serbian rape and aggression.

Faris adds that we as Muslims are justified in addressing our tragedy to the American public opinion, to the Japanese public opinion and to the whole world. But, unfortunately, we cannot address our cries to the Muslim Arabs since they themselves need somebody to cry for them since the emasculation in the second Gulf war.

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

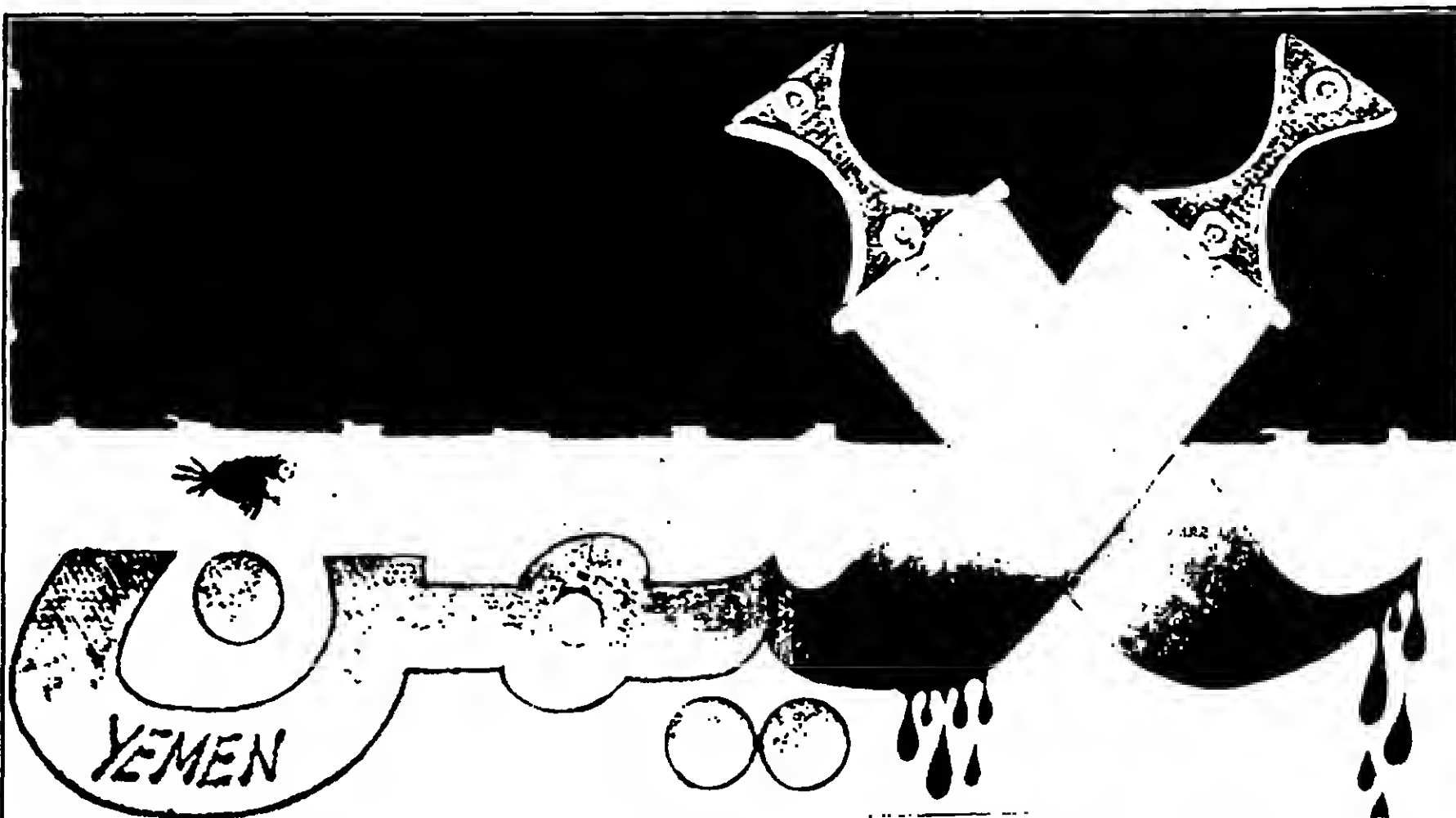
THE WAR in Yemen, the start of the autonomy rule in Gaza and Jericho and a number of domestic affairs near addressed by the local press over the past week.

Al Dustour described reports about imminent dialogue between the leaders of the north and south Yemen as very encouraging. There is no doubt that the war can achieve nothing for either of the two sides and that only through dialogue and reason can the leaders overcome the obstacles impeding reconciliation, said the paper.

The paper voiced backing to initiatives on the part of northern Yemeni leaders to seek dialogue with the more moderate elements of the Socialist Party in the south, stressing that the most important thing at the moment is to stop the bloodshed and end the sufferings of the Yemeni people at all costs.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the Yemeni leaders won the admiration of Arab masses when they settled their differences with the signing in Amman of a treaty for reconciliation but the same leaders lost credibility when they started a war between their two sides of the United Nations. The writer said that civil wars do not gain the support of any one except those who seek destruction of the country and an end to the Yemeni people's unity. Neither does the use of force to ensure continued unity between the north and south win the admiration of the Arab masses. The same leaders can regain credibility and support from everyone if they opt for reason and dialogue and end the confrontation, added the writer.

It is clear now that neither of the two sides in the Yemeni civil war can gain the upper hand and impose his will on the other, said Mohammad Kharoub, a columnist in Al Ra'i. The writer said that all indications point to the fact that the civil strife will go on for a long time, with detrimental consequences to the Yemeni people and their national economy and institutions. The longer the fighting, he said, the deeper will be the chasm separating the



THE WEEK IN PRINT

Yemenis should give talk a chance

two sides and making a reunited Yemen a very remote possibility in many years to come.

Al Ra'i daily described Israel's bombing of resistance positions in Lebanon as an attempt to undermine any success along the Lebanese-Israeli track in the peace parity. Also by its insistence not to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, calling for Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, Israel is showing no intention of ever reaching a peaceful settlement with its northern Arab neighbour, said the daily. Israel's escalation of its attacks on Lebanon and abduction of leaders of the resistance, said the paper, can never contribute to peace in the region.

Referring to autonomy

rule in Gaza and Jericho, a writer in Al Ra'i said that the Israeli authorities are acting in a manner that shows their disinterest in the implementation of the autonomy deal with the Palestinians. Yousef Mahmoud said that the Israeli leaders and their media are escalating the tension by attacking Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat for his call for jihad to save Jerusalem and because the Palestinian resistance killed two Israeli soldiers near Gaza recently. The Israelis, said the writer, are enlisting the help of Europeans to coerce Mr. Arafat into accepting humiliating terms and this is manifest in the Europeans demand that the Arabs end their boycott of Israel to guarantee aid to the Palesti-

nians.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the presence of the Jewish settlers in the Mideast of Arab inhabitants remains the main stumbling block impeding any progress in the peace process in general and the establishment of self-rule for Palestinians in particular. Any time a settler enters an Arab zone he is exposed to danger and Israel realises this fact but retains this explosive status quo, said the writer. In light of such attitude, Israel is not showing serious intentions of seeing the autonomy rule fulfilling its objectives at a time when the Palestinian authority does not yet stand on solid ground and has not yet set up institutions to enhance its presence in the Jericho and Gaza regions.

A columnist in Al Dustour daily tackled the current situation in the public administration expressing regret that the government's drive to introduce reform is being met with stiff resistance.

Expressing support for, and solidarity with, the prime minister for trying to introduce the reform and place the right person in the right position, Abdullah Al Khatib said that decentralisation sought by the government is far from being achieved since, according to his own recent experiences, cabinet ministers still hold the final say in most of the questions related to their offices. Stressing that senior officials who are clinging hard to the traditional routine, the writer said that reform in public adminis-

tration remains a wishful thinking and out of reach even under the umbrella of democracy.

Nazih Qusus, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, daily, drew attention to the fact that dairy processing firms are not abiding by regulations concerning the fitness of dairy products sold on the market.

Large quantities of yoghurt, which are returned to the plants from the stores upon their expiry dates are more often than not re-produced in the form of labaneh and their containers stamped with new expiry dates, said the writer.

He said that the Ministry of Supply ought to impose strict control on the dairy processing plants and prevent this manipulation and cheating.

Tough line brings major victory for China, humiliates U.S.

By Tiffany Bown
Agence France Presse

BEIJING — China's unyielding line towards U.S. pressure on human rights has brought it a major victory, enabling it to emerge from this year's intense Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status battle with little more than a light rap on the knuckles.

By all but ignoring Bill Clinton's 1993 threat to withdraw MFN status this year if it failed to make significant human rights progress, China not only ensured renewal of the coveted trade privilege. It also forced the U.S. president to make a humiliating policy U-turn and boosted China's clout throughout Asia.

Mr. Clinton said Thursday

he would delink trade from human rights in the future, limiting punishment of China's intransigence to imposing a ban on imports of Chinese guns and ammunition and retaining sanctions in place since the 1989 Tiananmen massacre.

The munitions ban is estimated to be worth \$200 million less than one per cent of China's \$22-billion trade surplus with the United States.

"China made clear to the United States it would go ahead with its own way of dealing with dissent and its domestic world with or without MFN," said a diplomat here, maintaining that — despite some "little grand gestures" — China's overall human rights situation had deteriorated this year.

Beijing's decision to call

Washington bluff over MFN rested on the savvy belief that the United States would never jeopardise a \$40-billion a year trade relationship and cause U.S. companies to be blocked from the world's fastest-growing market.

The extent of Beijing's confidence became apparent in March when it bumbled U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher by launching a major sweep on dissidents as he arrived here for talks with Chinese leaders.

"They made clear the more Clinton pushed, the more he would lose face," he said.

Diplomats here welcomed Mr. Clinton's decision to abandon his policy of linking trade to human rights, saying any breakdown in Sino-U.S. ties could have had far-reaching repercussions for re-

gional and international trade, geo-political alignments and cooperation in multilateral forums.

However, they warned Beijing's success in facing-down Washington would also have repercussions for China's handling of bilateral disputes in future.

"China will become more bullish. The Chinese wanted a big victory over the United States. This will raise their self-esteem and national pride and help China's fledgling attempt to become a major regional power," said one diplomat.

Chinese officials appeared smug over their victory Friday, with the foreign ministry welcoming Mr. Clinton's move while urging the United States to go further and lift all remaining sanctions on Chi-

na. Despite its success over MFN through intransigence, diplomats said however that Beijing was aware that a more flexible approach was needed to resolve trade disputes.

"The focus in Sino-U.S. ties is now on commerce," he said, predicting that China may well have promised Washington a number of concessions in this area as a trade-off over MFN.

Beijing announced this week that it had slashed import licences and quotas on 195 products, as agreed in a 1992 Sino-U.S. agreement on market access.

Human rights groups meanwhile warned that Mr. Clinton's decision would give China a free hand to abuse its

citizen's rights, at a time when high inflation, rising unemployment and the prospect of 89-year-old paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's death are heightening concern about social stability.

However, diplomats — while not discounting a crack-down in the run-up to the fifth anniversary of the Tiananmen massacre — disagreed that the move would have much impact domestically, saying China had in any case done little to influence the U.S. decision.

"Three or four people benefited, but in terms of overall human rights it didn't have much impact," a diplomat said, urging Washington to find a suitable forum for expressing its concerns on the issue more effectively.

ملكا من الملوك

Features

On the front line in Croatia

Jordanian soldiers keep the peace in a land of war

LAST WEEK, around 100 Jordanian soldiers left for former Yugoslavia to join other Jordanian peacekeepers who form the second largest contingent in the war-torn country. Jordan Times Staff Reporter Ica Wahbeh earlier this month visited the Jordanian contingent in Croatia and spent a week observing their mission there. She filed the following report, the second part of which will appear later this week.

AMMAN — Life and death. Love and hate. War and peace. Creation and destruction.

This is former Yugoslavia where, after four years of fierce fighting, these forces have come to define the daily life of the land and its people.

A land of paradoxes itself, this country of complicated history and incomprehensible contemporary drama gave new meaning to words stashed away in my genetic human heritage.

On a drizzly early afternoon in May our plane lands in Zagreb, capital of Croatia. "Nothing unusual," I think to myself waiting at the airport along with other journalists, until the 150 or so young French soldiers start filling the airport hall with the nonchalance of youth and ignorance.

The "blue berets" are here, like our Jordanian troops, to keep peace in a land of deep-buried hatred and savage revenge.

It takes some time to clear out of the airport (a first taste of "love" for the U.N. presence on this territory), but with the help of Maj. Issam Nabulsi, a member of the Jordanian peacekeeping force in Croatia, our delegation finally gets on the about 50 km ride to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) headquarters in Zagreb. The ride is done in a peaceful atmosphere among lush vegetation and flower-studded fields. People going about their work give life an air of normalcy that belies the cruelty witnessed a few hundred kilometres away on the war front.

Our first destination, the

place where the Jordanian troops were first stationed in May 1992, is Novska, 100 km south east of Zagreb.

Deputy Commander Col. Tawfiq Hamed Tawalbeh makes an excellent guide for a first-timer in the area. The soft-spoken, tall man drives us through an emerald green landscape on a straight highway leading from the capital to this village at the border between Serbs and Croats.

The village looks prosperous; people live off their land and some industries around (oil extraction, chemical). Most villagers seem to be rebuilding houses that carry the marks of the war which erupted when Croatia declared its independence from former Yugoslavia.

The reality is that had it not been for the Jordanian peacekeepers, who arrived in the city after the Serbs and the Croats reached a ceasefire agreement, the beautiful homes that so warmly received us would have been deserted.

The first Jordanian battalion, Jorbat I, as it is known in military terminology, is led by Col. Sami Abu Zeid.

"When we first came here, the village was deserted. Slowly, as people realised that we are here to preserve peace and there is no more danger to their lives, they started trickling back to the village," says Col. Abu Zeid, taking us on a tour of the surroundings. "Now they lead a normal life," he explains while waiting to children on the sidewalk. They all know him, as does everybody on a wide radius around.

The eastern sector of the



Jorbat I soldier on alert at a checkpoint between Serbs and Croats (photo by Ica Wahbeh)

village, once inhabited by Serbs, looks as if it had been eaten by smallpox. From bullet holes to whole floors blown off and concrete poles with steel reinforcement twisted and bent out of shape like children toys, the village spells destruction.

"I do not understand this war," a young Croatian woman says. "We had Serb friends, very good friends. And then the war started and we all changed."

Sector West, as this territory is known, has the Sava River forming the border with Bosnia-Herzegovina in the south. The nature of the terrain is such that a map with the separation lines and the separation zone drawn on it looks like some puzzle bits, full of tricky curves and angles.

"When we first came here, the village was deserted. Slowly, as people realised that we are here to preserve peace and there is no more danger to their lives, they started trickling back to the village" — Col. Sami Abu Zeid

The Europe-Asia highway which passes through this sector is now closed. UNPROFOR uses it for refugees or movement from Croatia to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The ceasefire line separates the Croats, to the northwest, from the Serbs, to the southeast.

The Jordanian soldiers deal with the two sides professionally and are equally appreciated by both. The battalion has three infantry,

one mechanised, one special forces and one headquarters companies. They have five corps: medical, engineering, maintenance, supply and telecommunication, served by 914 soldiers.

The mission of the battalion, as Col. Abu Zeid details it, is to protect civilians and U.N. personnel and the movement of all. There are several checkpoints manned by Jordanian soldiers and the buffer zone is under their

supervision as well.

Problems faced? "Each side wants more than it is allowed or given by U.N. resolutions and what they had agreed upon."

On March 29, a ceasefire agreement was signed between the Croatian government and Serb authorities under U.S., Russian, European Union (EU) and U.N. auspices. Among the provisions of the pact there are those regarding withdrawal of weapons from the separation zone to degrees varying according to the nature of the arms: heavy artillery 20 km, medium-range 10 km and infantry and light artillery from two to four kilometres. The Jordanian mandate covers checking on this withdrawal as well.

One can only guess whether it is a difficult task or not. Not one soldier ever complains. All one can detect is pride in a mission performed to the best of their ability.

In Poljana, where one of the Jordanian infantry companies is situated, non-commissioned officer (NCO) Adnan Ali Abed says: "We perform our duty irrespective of the weather conditions or difficulties. People respect us; we have no problems."

During an evening tour of Novska a call crackles on the radio. Anca, the old woman who made the news as the only person left in her village and whom the Jordanians look after, was seriously sick. The worried officer, Col. Abu Zeid, starts inquiring about her. Before we leave Novska, she is out of hospital.

The same officer is the toast of a Swedish media group which have the surprise to find him in the funeral procession of a Serb killed by friendly fire. The weathered colonel has time to show care to the people for whose peace keeping he is responsible.

On the third day after our arrival in Novska (and what felt like a hundred years of experience and information bits) we leave the village for Sector South where Jorbat III is located.

The municipality of Gracac, including Lovinae where the Jordanian troops are positioned, is in the middle of Serb-controlled Krajina region.

Sector South, like every other sector on the map, is not controlled by Jordanians alone. There are also Czechs, Canadians and Kenyans. Our boys are in some of the most interesting, if not dangerous, areas of the sector.

Col. Mahmoud Saleh Mahameh, the commander of the Jordanian troops in Sector South, talks about the takeover from the Cana-

dians, about the deployment of troops from Split (on the Adriatic Sea) to Lovinae about the 36 places in by our soldiers.

The March 29 pact for arms collection on both sides: Serbs and Croats. "We monitor all that goes. We have difficult weather conditions and geographical mountains covered with snow until summer, water move easily, limit movement due to the terrain which makes transportation difficult," says Mahameh.

No description would have prepared the gruelling trip the next to the top of the Deba (some call it Vilabel Alan) mountains.

The serpentine road could be an exact test for the toughest, desolate, grey granite, rugged peaks profile bizarre shapes on changing skies.

The 30 to 40 soldiers stationed on the mountain peak (slopes of which were still covered by snow) at around 1,100m altitude are a special forces platoon for whom the engineering corps had cleared four kilometres of land. Barbed wire surrounds them and a tent is raised to protect against the wind.

The gale is cutting like a knife through the patched fatigue jackets brightened by blue collars and berets. "It must be hard for our people to live for such a long stretch of time without seeing anyone and under hostile weather conditions," I am thinking to myself. But I am to be proven wrong.

"We are here for a humanitarian cause," Staff Sergeant Naief Alagarmeh says.

The duty of the platoon is to monitor respect of ceasefire, to patrol the separation zone (20 km) between Serbs and Croats and to communicate any suspicious move to Jorbat III.

Israel lifts closure

(Continued from page 1)

ramme." The PNA met Thursday night for the first time since taking on responsibility for running the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip. The meeting was attended by Farouk Kaddoumi and Mahmoud Abbas, two members in Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement who are not members of the interim government.

It resumed the meeting on Friday at Mr. Arafat's office. Reporters noted the presence of Hanan Ashrawi, former spokeswoman of Palestinian peace negotiators. She accepted appointment to the 24-member PNA after earlier turning it down.

On Thursday, the PLO named Abdul Hafidh Al Ashhab, a leader from the West Bank town of Hebron, as the 19th member of the PNA. Al Ashhab and other PNA members, Riyadh Zaannoun and Sari Nuseibeh, from the occupied territories did not make it to Tunis in time for the meeting.

PLO sources say Mr. Nuseibeh has not confirmed acceptance of his nomination while Mr. Zaannoun has a

problem with his passport. The PNA decided to create 22 portfolios, but still has to assign the duties of "ministers," who were to swear an oath of office Friday Mr. Ghosheh said.

The PNA stresses in its programme that it has an interim role until "democratic and free" elections in the self-rule area which are expected some time between July and October.

In an attempt apparently aimed at limiting Mr. Arafat's autocratic style, the programme says also that the internal functioning of the PNA should be democratic and the shortcomings of the PLO Executive Committee rectified.

The first Palestinian self-rule government appears to be a coalition of Fatah, independents, Yasser Ahd-Rabbio's movement, FIDA, and Mr. Ghosheh's Palestine Popular Struggle Front.

PLO officials said sympathisers from Hamas and the ex-Communist Palestine People's Party have turned down a Fatah offer to join the PNA. Both oppose the self-rule agreement.

Lebanon seeks

(Continued from page 1)

Its foreign minister, Farouk Al Sharaa, called during talks with Mr. Posuvalyuk on Russia and the United States, as co-sponsors of the peace process, to publicly condemn the abduction.

Israel has said it wanted to question Mr. Dirani on the fate of Israeli airman Ron Arad, missing since his plane was shot down during a bombing mission over south Lebanon in October 1986.

Israeli officials say Mr. Dirani held Arad for two years and then sold him to Iranian revolutionary guards based in eastern Lebanon. Iran and Iran-backed factions in

Lebanon have denied holding Mr. Arad.

Meanwhile, Israeli-backed militiamen captured a Muslim guerrilla outside Israel's occupation zone in south Lebanon on Friday, security sources said.

South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen seized the guerrilla, identified as belonging to the pro-Iranian Hizbollah group, on Nabi Taher Hill just outside the zone, they added.

The guerrilla was armed with an AK-47 assault rifle. Hizbollah (Party of God) guerrillas launch attacks almost daily on the Israeli-held zone in their bid to liberate south Lebanon.

PLO unseals

(Continued from page 1)

Over 200 members of Fatah, the group loyal to PLO chief Yasser Arafat, appeared to block about 20 Hamas members, including one who was armed. A Fatah member attempted to arrest a Hamas member, police said, so both were detained.

Police spokesman Lt. Col. Mansour Rayyes said he could

not comment on the details until the investigation was completed.

Palestinian police took control of the Gaza Strip on May 18. Israel has said that expanding autonomy to other occupied territory will depend on running Gaza and Jericho successfully and foiling attacks on Israelis.

Israel considering

(Continued from page 1)

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Thursday that Mr. Arafat would not be allowed in Jerusalem when he visits Gaza and Jericho next month.

Mr. Rabin dismissed reports that the PLO had drafted a constitution proclaiming Jerusalem as "capital of Palestine."

"We have signed an agreement for autonomy for an interim period and anything else is hot air," he said.

The constitution was drafted by senior PLO figures.

The PLO's London-based Legal Committee faxed a copy of the 21-page draft to the Associated Press in Jerusalem. Article 5, on the first page, unequivocally declares Jerusalem as "the capital of Palestine."

It goes on to say that "during the transitional period, the Palestinian authorities may set up the government headquarters in any other place in Palestine." The Palestinian Authority plans to set up office in Jericho pending resolution of the Jerusalem issue.

Sources close to Mr. Rabin told the respected Haaretz daily that the document was the "most serious violation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement to date."

Mr. Rabin has said the facts on the ground, and not words are what's important. "It's all talk," he was quoted by Haaretz as reacting to the constitution.

"Just as the Israelis have repeatedly declared Jerusalem their own eternal capital, we have the right to declare it our own capital," Legal Committee Chairman Anis Qassem told the AP in a telephone interview from his London office.

Israelis are also angry because they say that legislation should be left up to the 24-member Palestinian Authority, which has yet to be named and

reviewed by a joint Israel-Palestinian Committee.

But Mr. Qassem, an author of the document, said it was less a constitution and more a "basic laws document... the first step towards a constitution."

More articles dealing with sovereignty issues such as borders and statehood will be added to the basic law document during the five-year self-rule, Mr. Qassem said.

That is also likely to anger Israelis, who would like to leave the issue of statehood undecided during the self-rule.

The PLO legal committee drafted the 108-article document since October, shortly after the Sept. 13 signing of the Declaration of Principles.

The document defines Jerusalem as a city holy to the "three divine religions," Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Article 31 says that Palestinian authorities will provide conditions for tolerant coexistence between religions in Jerusalem and the rest of Palestine.

The document limits the presidential term to five years only, without extension, a nod towards Palestinians suspicious of Mr. Arafat's autocratic tendencies.

"The first term of the first president and any successor in the transitional period shall expire with expiry of the transitional period," Article 52 says.

Fundamental rights and freedoms are also guaranteed according to standard international agreements.

The document incorporates the current PLO hierarchy into the government of the self-rule, naming the current Mr. Arafat, as the head of the national authority. It also preserves the by-laws of the Palestinian parliament-in-exile, the Palestine National Council.

South pushes back

(Continued from page 1)

May 1990 between the conservative, tribal North Yemen and former Marxist South.

Abdul Rahman Al Jifri, vice president of the break-away state with its capital in Aden, had said the Saudi proposal was welcome. "But we are strong enough to defend ourselves and our capital," he said.

An Arab League peace mission to Sanaa at the outset of the conflict, which fol-

lowed a nine-month power struggle between Southern leader Ali Salem Al Beidh and Mr. Saleh, also failed to push the president to negotiate with his deputy.

In Sanaa, Mr. Saleh has appointed new ministers of oil and transport in a further bid to isolate supporters of Mr. Al Beidh.

Mr. Saleh appointed Faisal Uthman Ibn Shamlan, a southerner, as minister of petroleum and minerals

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TOKYO (AFP)—Japan's five biggest steelmakers, hunkering under the weight of a prolonged economic slowdown and a stronger yen, have announced combined pre-tax losses of more than \$2 billion for the year to March.

Four of the companies—NKK Corp., Sumitomo Metal Industries Ltd., Kobe Steel Ltd. and Kawasaki Steel Corp.—suspended year-end dividends. And although market leader Nippon Steel Corp. managed to cough up 2.5 yen for its shareholders, the pay out was down from 3.5 yen a year earlier.

While none gave profit forecasts for the coming year, the five companies, which are facing intense competition from South Korean steelmakers in their home market, agreed that business conditions would remain extremely difficult.

"The operating environment will become more severe due to the continuing recession in Japan, declining demand for steel in exporting industries and decreased exports to China," said Nippon Steel.

The company said it "foresees the recession continuing in the year ahead" and also warned that "private-sector capital investment will remain depressed due to disappointing

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ABU DHABI (AFP) — A project to set up an joint Arab power pool will cost nearly \$6 billion but will save more than \$10 billion, according to an official study.

About \$2.5 billion will be needed for the project covering eastern Arab countries while the rest will cover the six Arab states in North Africa, said the study by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).

The joint Arab power grid will induce investment need to raise electric production capacity to meet demand," the Kuwait-based fund said in the study, published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Al-Naseef.

"That will save \$10.15 billion. Since the cost of the project is estimated at \$6 billion, this means there will be net savings in both areas of the Arab World of \$4.15 billion."

A common power grid linking the Arab League's 22 members, found to be technically feasible, has been on the cards for several years but the project was held up by political differences and financing problems.

The project will be implemented in stages, each covering a group of neighbouring members.

The main phase is the link within the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), estimated to cost \$2 billion.

AFESD deputy chairman Mirfat Badawi said the Arab World could link up with Europe when its own network is completed.

She said the common network would upgrade power supplies in the region and ensure supplies to any member in emergency.

cent to 2,160 billion yen in the same period.

The top steelmaker projected a consolidated loss of 37 billion yen for the latest year, reversing a group profit of 29 billion yen a year earlier. Consolidated revenue was forecast to fall seven per cent to 2,750 billion yen.

NKK announced a 34.2 billion yen loss, compared with a profit of 4.1 billion yen the previous year. Sales fell 7.8 per cent to 1,200 billion yen.

Sumitomo meanwhile suf-

pany, which reversed a profit of 14.5 billion yen a year earlier, was accompanied by a forecast for a consolidated loss of nine billion yen in the same period, compared with a 10.4 billion profit previously.

Kube Steel blamed Japan's protracted recession and the yen's appreciation for its poor performance in the latest year. While it failed to make projections for the full year ahead, the company stressed the "difficult" business environment in which it was operating.

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S. Africa readmitted to ILO after 30 years

GENEVA (It) — South Africa has pledged to respect workers' rights and has been readmitted to the International Labour Organization (ILO) after a 30-year period of reconstruction."

South Africa's new coalition government, headed by President F.W. de Klerk, was

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GENEVA (R) — South Africa has pledged to respect workers' rights and has been readmitted to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) after a 30-year absence, an ILO spokeswoman said Friday.

The move paves the way for the U.N. agency to advise on how to create jobs in the country, where about 47.9 per cent of the work force, 14.9 million is unemployed, she added.

South Africa, which withdrew from the ILO in 1964 amid a mounting campaign against its racist policies, notified the Geneva-based agency Thursday it was rejoining and would respect the ILO constitution, spokeswoman Madeleine Moulins told journalists.

"South Africa, has become a member of the ILO. It is official since yesterday," she said. "This will pave the way for an ILO programme of assistance ... during South Africa's period of reconstruction."

South Africa's new coalition government, headed by President Nelson Mandela, was sworn in three weeks ago after the country's first all-race elections last month.

Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo notified the ILO Thursday that his country would honour the organisation's constitution, according to the agency.

"South Africa has pledged to respect workers' rights in all its forms and consequences," an ILO official told Reuters.

"These include the right to free association and collective bargaining," he added.

South Africa was a founding member of the ILO, set up in 1919 to promote social justice and labour rights.

The ILO's annual meeting, the International Labour Conference, will take place in Geneva from June 7-24.

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ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states, which control one fifth of world crude supplies, are expected to boost oil exports to Japan and other Asian countries to meet a steady growth in demand amid declining supplies there, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has said.

Saudi Arabia and other Gulf oil giants are already major crude exporters to east Asian nations and believe those clients will account for the bulk of the increase in future supplies.

The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), outlining local oil developments, said Asian markets offered better profit margins as prices there are bigger than in the recession-hit West.

"Crude exports from other Asian countries are expected to diminish because of the growing internal demand in those countries, thus consolidating future exports from the UAE and other Gulf suppliers," it said in a report.

It gave no figures for the whole Gulf but said 82 per cent of the UAE's 1993 oil exports of about two million barrels per day (b/d) went to Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, India and other Asian states.

It said the recession had depressed crude sales to the West and consequently hit demand and the profit margin.

Asian countries also accounted for 92 per cent of the country's exports of refined products of about five million tonnes, the report said.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Gulf oil producers have been engaged in projects to boost output capacity to meet demand and OPEC oil, projected to rise by nearly 10 million b/d by 2000.

The projects will push the UAE's capacity to nearly 3.5 million b/d in 2000 from 2.5 million b/d, while in Saudi Arabia it will reach 10 million b/d in 1995 and 12 million b/d in 2000.

Kuwait's capacity is expected to exceed three million b/d while Iraq had projected a rise to five million b/d.

The four countries currently produce around 13 million b/d their crude reserves account for about 55 per cent of the total world oil reserves.

Japan has remained the top importer of Gulf oil, receiving about 2.8 million b/d, nearly 60 per cent of its oil needs. Independent Japanese estimates have forecast levels will reach 70 per cent in 2000.

China, with crude reserves of about 24 billion barrels, has started to buy oil from the Gulf as it expects to become more reliant on imports to face a large increase in domestic demand due to a rapid economic growth.

China, also a major market for Gulf fertilizers, currently produces around 2.8 million b/d of oil compared with three million b/d five years ago.

According to the Cairo-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), oil demand in east Asia was projected to surge to 19.7 million b/d in 2000 from 14.1 million b/d in 1992.

"Those countries currently import around 45 per cent of their oil needs and the level will increase to 66 per cent in the year 2000 given their relatively small reserves of around 45 billion barrels," OAPEC said in a recent study.

"The rapid economic growth in those countries has made them the main factor in growth in demand in the world oil markets and producers in the Middle East are their main source of supply," it pointed out.

ADNOC said it had marketed all its oil output in 1993 despite world recession and 75 per cent of the supplies went to Japan.

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WORLDWIDE EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession in the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U. S. \$1.00 equals	1.3856-69	Canadian dollar
	1.6472-82	Deutschmarks
	1.8472-82	Dutch guilders
	1.4065-75	Swiss francs
	23.91-95	Belgian francs
	5.6269-10	French francs
	1891.83-3	Italian lire
	104.68-78	Japanese yen
	7.7250-80	Swedish crowns
	7.1320-60	Norwegian crowns
	6.4500-40	Danish crowns
	\$1.982-92	
One sterling		
One of gold	\$388.40-385.90	

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Bosnian rivals are still far apart on division of land

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serbs said Friday the positions of Bosnia's warring factions on how to divide up the country were still far apart following two-day talks this week.

This pessimistic view was in contrast to a comment by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe that an agreement to end the bloody conflict appeared to be within reach.

The chief Serb negotiator Momcilo Krajisnik, speaker of their self-styled parliament, told Bosnian Serb television "nothing qualitatively new was achieved" at the talks in Talloires, France, which ended Thursday without apparent agreement.

Government-controlled Bosnian Radio said the talks with a "contact group" of mediators from the United States, Russia and the European Union would resume in France in 10 days time.

In Bosnia itself heavy fighting was reported to be raging in the north and centre between Muslim-led government troops backed by their new Croat allies and the Serbs.

Gradacac, in the north, was reported by Bosnian radio to be under heavy Serb artillery and infantry attack from early Friday morning.

"This is the most difficult morning since July 1992 — it's

like hell here," a ham radio operator in the town was quoted as saying.

Mr. Krajisnik told Bosnian Serb television that the Talloires talks could be seen as positive "because some information was exchanged and some dilemmas about the Bosnian crisis were explained", according to the Bosnian Serb news agency (SRNA).

But he added: "The differences between the two sides are considerable and great efforts are needed for a final solution to be reached because the Muslim is persistently making its stand more radical, insisting on the war option."

The Muslim-Croat alliance indicated at the talks they were ready to modify their territorial demands and "partly accepted" a proposal by international mediators giving them 51 per cent of the country.

The Serbs, who control 70 per cent and would get 49 per cent under the new plan, accused the Muslims of making "megalomaniac demands."

In Paris, Mr. Juppe told Radio France Internationale Friday: "We're at a crucial stage. I think the coming weeks between now and July will be decisive."

Mr. Juppe said international negotiators were seeking to impose a ceasefire, set Bosnia's

borders, establish governing institutions in the former Yugoslav republic and begin rebuilding the country.

"I think it's within our reach."

Last week Mr. Juppe said there must be marked progress towards peace in Bosnia by a mid-June meeting of big power foreign ministers or else France would prepare to withdraw some of its U.N. peacekeepers from northern Bosnia by year-end.

"If we are just standing still, if we are refused any diplomatic breakthrough, then we will have to revise our policy," he said Friday.

In Sarajevo, a spokesman for the U.N. Protection Force, Major Rob Annink, said a prisoner exchange between the Bosnian government and the Serbs had fallen through Thursday after the Bosnian side refused to release its detainees.

The need for an exchange arose when two Muslim engineers on a repair mission took a wrong turn about two weeks ago and were detained at a Serb checkpoint outside Sarajevo.

A Bosnian government liaison officer Friday rejected UNPROFOR's characterisation of events, saying: "It's a ridiculous charge they're mak-

ing that we refused to release prisoners in some sort of exchange."

"Our people were on a legitimate utility repair mission when they were taken out of the back of a truck and arrested. Why should we have to release anyone to get them back?"

In the Muslim enclave of Gorazde, eastern Bosnia, U.N. peacekeepers and relief officials were preparing to evacuate sick and wounded from the town, which has been under Serb siege for two years.

Meanwhile, Serbia has asked to attend next week's meeting of foreign ministers from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa said Friday.

Egypt is opposed to Serbia's membership of the movement, but Mr. Moussa said the request would be studied by senior NAM officials on the eve of the conference.

Several NATO members have asked to send observers to the three-day conference which begins Tuesday, said Mr. Moussa.

He recently described Serbia as "a country which violates international law," and said it was not the only state to have emerged from the former Yugoslavia.



Ships arrive at Miragoane 100 kilometres from Port Au Prince with flour and clothes. The total U.N. embargo against Haiti imposed since May 21 allows for the delivery of humanitarian aid (AFP photo)

U.S. lawmakers fear invasion of Haiti during Memorial Day recess

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Republican lawmakers fear a U.S. invasion of Haiti during the Memorial Day recess and have urged President Bill Clinton not to authorise force, but expedite a processing facility for Haitian refugees.

"I really hope the president does not plan to invade Haiti during the recess," Representative Newt Gingrich, Republican for Georgia, said before Congress adjourned Thursday to reconvene June 7.

Representative Porter Gross, who asked the president to immediately stop repatriating Haitian boat people, said the presence of 650 Marines and eight U.S. warships off the coast of Haiti seemed very threatening.

"Our message is: Do not use that muscle at this time," the Florida Republican told reporters.

On announcing on May 7 his decision to give Haitian re-

fugees immigration hearings before repatriating them, Mr. Clinton did not rule out military force to restore democracy and ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti.

The House of Representatives this week approved a nonbinding amendment recommending that a small Haitian island be used as a refugee processing centre and a base for a government in exile headed by Mr. Aristide.

A spokesman for Mr. Aristide voiced support Thursday for using Ile De La Gonave as a processing centre — "Anything is better than sending them back to that hell hole," but not for establishing on it a government in exile.

"Basically, it's a tactic by people who want to stall and run out the clock," Burton Wides said referring to Mr. Aristide's term in office which expires at the end of next year. He was ousted in September

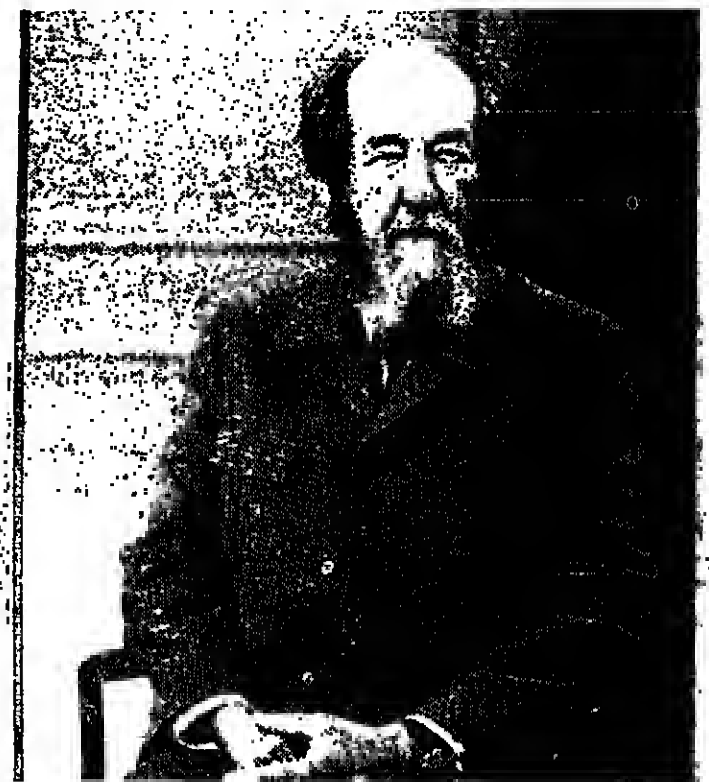
1991, six months after his election.

Mr. Wides criticised a U.N.-sponsored, total economic embargo against Haiti that went into effect Sunday as not going far enough. He also said Mr. Clinton could do other things to pressure the Haitian military rulers to step down.

Mr. Wides mentioned freezing the assets here of all Haitians, not just military leaders, and cancelling all visas.

"It's almost as if the (Clinton) administration is pushing itself into the inevitability of either a military assault... or forcing Aristide to share power," the spokesman said.

A group of Democratic congressmen asked Mr. Clinton Thursday to halt the repatriation of Haitian refugees immediately, in view of a new Haitian law making it illegal to leave the island in makeshift boats.



Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Solzhenitsyn returns home

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia (R) — Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn, returning to his native Russia after 20 years in exile, was mobbed by journalists on his arrival in Vladivostok Friday.

Some 20 television teams and a total of 150 cameramen, sound crew, reporters and photographers swarmed the official party led by the deputy governor of Primorsky region, Igor Lebedev.

Security men clearing a path to the airport terminal building came close to blows with some newsmen.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn, 75, smiled and embraced boisterous-carrying admirers in the crowd. But he looked tired and overwhelmed after a 38-hour trip from his exile home in the U.S. state of Vermont, round the other side of the world.

His son Yermolai and his wife Natalya supported him on either side. But he said he would stick to his plan of meeting the people on Vladivostok's main square.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn plans to return to Moscow overland through Russia, making a voyage of rediscovery of his homeland.

Also at the airport were Bishop Veniamin of Vladivostok, main city of Russia's Far East, and two women in folk dress bearing the bread and salt traditionally offered to travellers.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn, Russia's best-known living writer, set foot in Russia for the first time in 20 years earlier Friday when the plane made a refuelling stopover in Magadan.

In a brief statement he complained that the millions who died in Communist prison camps were being forgotten too easily by his fellow countrymen.

"Today in the heat of political change those millions of victims are too lightly forgotten, both by those who were not touched by that annihilation, and even more so, by those who were responsible for it."

Mr. Solzhenitsyn then bowed low to the tarmac to pay his respects to those who died in the prison camps scattered throughout the desolate Kolyan region of which Magadan is

the capital.

"I bow to the earth of Kolyan where many hundreds of thousands, if not millions of our executed fellow-countrymen are buried," he said.

"Under ancient Christian traditions, land where innocent victims are buried becomes holy. We shall consider it so in the hope that the light of Russia's coming recovery will reach Kolyan region."

Mr. Solzhenitsyn, Nobel Literature Prize winner in 1970, became famous inside and outside Russia for his portrayal of the huge system of repression built up largely by dictator Josef Stalin, under which millions of real and imagined political opponents were jailed, exiled and shot by the Communists.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn had said before leaving the United States he hoped to be able to get off at Magadan because he had only seen Siberia "from the window of a prison railway car."

Russians from top officials downwards are likely to welcome Mr. Solzhenitsyn, an icon of defiance to Communist tyranny.

But the publicity-shy writer remains deeply suspicious of officialdom. Yermolai said he would not allow officials to dictate his schedule.

"Fear could never make my father do anything. He always did everything that he wanted to do," Yermolai said in Vladivostok.

Yuri Prokofyev, an aide to Mr. Solzhenitsyn, added: "This is not an official visit by a delegation. This is a writer returning to his homeland and so there will be no official protocol."

Mr. Solzhenitsyn was jailed and then banished after the publication in Paris of The Gulag Archipelago, a horrifying account of the brutal Soviet labour camps.

He spent the first two years of his exile in Switzerland. He then moved in 1976 to a retreat in Vermont where he lived as a semi-recluse with his family, rarely breaking his silence.

Mr. Solzhenitsyn exposed the terror of Soviet rule and outraged its leaders with such works as One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich, Cancer Ward and The First Circle.

European ministers agree on moves to defuse conflicts

PARIS (AFP) — European foreign ministers agreed Friday on measures aimed at preventing border conflicts in Eastern Europe and solving problems over ethnic minorities.

The 53 delegations meeting at UNESCO headquarters here agreed unanimously to set up two regional roundtables, one dealing with the problems of Russian minorities in the three Baltic states, and the other with Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Romania.

Russia reacted ambiguously, with the conference seen as an attempt to extend EU influence in areas once ruled by the former Soviet Union.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, addressing fellow ministers, welcomed the planned pact, but warned it might conflict with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The two-day meeting, which opened Thursday, was the brainchild of French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur. It was sponsored by France and the European Union to defuse potential conflicts among would-be candidates to the European Union from Eastern and Central Europe and the Baltic region.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe denied at a press conference that the stability conference was duplicating existing organisations such as the

CSCE.

The stability conference was "filling a vacuum" and was "not a CSCE mark-2, nor another Council of Europe nor a Western European Union," Mr. Juppe said.

The foreign minister said that the CSCE had not undertaken any action on behalf of the Hungarian minorities, for example, and that it was the special interest of the EU to sponsor efforts to solve the problems of future members.

Mr. Juppe hailed the conference as "a great success," but insisted that "the essential remains to be done" in preparing accords to be signed into the Stability Pact.

He said the conference would disappear "within a year" when the pact was inaugurated.

One of 10 countries listed as a potential new member — Slovenia — was dropped in the final draft of potential new members, leaving Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

The move illustrated that some existing EU members also have minority problems. Officially Slovenia was removed because it has no association agreement with the EU, but Slovenian conference sources said the new Italian government had applied pressure on behalf of the 3,000-strong Slovenian minority in Italy agitating to recover their property in Slovenia.

N. Korean difficulties could push it to war, S. Korean president says

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam, painting a bleak picture of Communist North Korea's economy, said Friday that a military provocation by Pyongyang could come at any time.

"North Korea is in an extremely difficult situation which is beyond our imagination," the domestic Yonhap News Agency quoted Mr. Kim as telling air force officers.

"The North could commit provocation at any time, so we are in a very dangerous situation now," Mr. Kim was quoted as saying during a visit to an airbase close to the border with North Korea.

Mr. Kim is due to leave next Wednesday for Russia and Uzbekistan for a week-long trip.

Mr. Kim said North Korea, at the focus of international concerns over its suspected nuclear programme, is facing a serious food and energy shortage.

"History gives us a lesson that an individual or a state easily resorts to irrational acts when faced with a difficult situation."

North Korea admitted last December that its economy was facing difficulties.

"Currently, a large number of factories (in the north) halted operations, and electricity is supplied to the rural area for only about three hours a day," Mr. Kim was quoted as saying.

"It is difficult to watch television because of a low voltage. Furthermore, there are military units whose soldiers are suffering from malnutrition... because of food shortage."

Mr. Kim said despite the food and energy crisis, the North has recently increased fighter training exercises close to the border with the South.

"Peace on the Korean peninsula will be maintained only when we are stronger," he added.

A communique issued following a meeting of the North's ruling Korea Workers' Party last December revealed the failure of huge sections of the economy, with industrial output sagging, power and steel production, poor and unspecified serious farm problems.

Since the demise of the Soviet Bloc, the communique revealed, North Korea has been forced to pay world prices in hard currency for essential imports such as oil, equipment and raw materials for industry.

Tensions mounted on the Korean peninsula last month as the North refused international calls to ally fears over its suspected nuclear weapons programme. It warned of war if pushed too far.

Diplomats cool on Khmer Rouge proposal

PHNOM PENH (R) — A ceasefire proposal by Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrillas has little prospect of success and is more a ploy to stop sympathetic countries from providing the government with arms, diplomats said Friday.

"It's a blatant attempt to prevent military assistance to the royal government," one diplomat told Reuters.

The Khmer Rouge proposed the ceasefire plan for discussion when the talks begin in the North Korean capital Pyongyang later Friday.

The Khmer Rouge proposed

a list of 10 countries to act as international ceasefire monitors, but the diplomat said: "You couldn't pick a list of countries less likely to participate in a ceasefire."

Nominal rebel leader Khieu Samphan proposed 10 countries from which a short list of five would be drawn.

They are Brunei, Fiji, Egypt, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Switzerland, Finland, Sri Lanka, Austria and Nepal.

The diplomat said the Khmer Rouge proposal would also internationalise the origin-

al ceasefire initiative devised by head of state King Norodom Sihanouk.

"Does this mean it's going to stop military activity or the Khmer Rouge drawing on (arms) supplies near the Thai-Cambodian border," he said.

"The Khmer Rouge's short-term medium-term strategy is to prevent military assistance going to the royal government," the diplomat said.

He added the Khmer Rouge was now setting its own conditions for talks which were originally unconditional.

Burmese election anniversary ignored

RANGOON (AFP) — The fourth anniversary of the 1990 general elections, touted as the freest in Burma's history although the opposition's landslide win was never recognised, went virtually unnoticed in Rangoon Friday.

The ruling military junta, known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), remains firmly in control of the country while opposition leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, remain in confinement.

"Politics, at least the party kind, is considered a dirty word here — best left out of your thoughts," one Rangoon resident commented Friday, while admitting that the election anniversary had completely slipped his mind.

Since the junta's takeover in September 1988, it has stressed economic development. A 16-month-old constitutional convention the junta sponsored to define future political structures has been in recess since April 11.

The SLORC, while vowing to turn Burma into a peaceful, modern and prosperous state, insisted that the constitution should guarantee a leadership role for the military.

It was business as usual for Rangoon's five million residents, whose state-owned dailies Friday were full of optimistic economic reports and little else.

Highlighting a visit by Indonesian businessman to Rangoon, the New Light of Myanmar enthused there was "much competition" to invest in Burma, thanks to the policies of the SLORC.

"Myanmar, the heartland of Asia, will soon prove to be the hub of economic activity," the newspaper said. Myanmar is the official name of Burma.

The national planning and economic development minister, Brigadier General David Abel, told the Indonesian businessman Thursday that 84 companies from 16 countries had so far invested more than

\$1 billion in Burma.

Investors have been coming in despite a U.S.-led policy of Western nations to isolate Burma as a means of putting pressure on the government to make political and human rights concessions, observers noted.

Aung San Suu Kyi, charismatic leader of opposition forces and daughter of Burma's late independence hero, Aung San, has been under house arrest since 1989 despite international appeals for her release.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) that she led scored a landslide victory in the 1990 polls, but the military refused to recognise the victory and cracked down on the opposition.

Neighbouring countries in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) follow a policy of constructive engagement with the view that contacts can better effect change.

Gay group seeks pardon for Oscar Wilde

LONDON (AP) — A gay rights group is seeking a posthumous royal pardon for 19th century playwright Oscar Wilde, who was jailed as a result of a homosexual relationship 99 years ago. Outrage said that it had written to Queen Elizabeth II asking her to pardon Wilde, who wrote the novel The Picture Of Dorian Gray, and plays including The Importance Of Being Earnest and Lady Windermere's Fan. "Wilde was the victim of unjust laws," said Outrage spokesman Peter Tatebell. "His imprisonment is a stain on the judicial system." Mr. Tatebell said the cruel conditions of Victorian prisons led to Wilde's premature death at the age of 46, three years after he was released. Wilde's experience of prison prompted his poem, The Ballad Of Reading Gaol, and De Profundis was written in prison. Wilde's infatuation with the young Lord Alfred Douglas led to his imprisonment. Douglas's father, the 8th Marquess of Queensbury, accused Wilde of sodomy and gaoled him into prison. Wilde lost the case and was tried and convicted in 1895 of committing indecent acts with men. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment at hard labour. Homosexuality was a crime in Britain until 1967.

Madonna's corset goes for \$18,000

LONDON (R) — A pink corset designed by Jean-Paul Gaultier and worn by pop star Madonna during her 1990 concert tour was sold for \$12,000 (\$18,000), auctioneers Christie's said. An alto saxophone signed by U.S. President Bill Clinton and members of rock group Fleetwood Mac went for \$22,000 (\$33,000) at the London sale of rock memorabilia. At rival auctioneers Sotheby's love letters from Russian-born composer Dmitri Shostakovich to his mistress Elena Konstantinovskaya, a language student then aged 210, were sold to a dealer for £10,925 (\$16,500). "Almost entirely unpublished, they reveal a passionate but little-known episode in the composer's married life," Sotheby's said in a statement. Sotheby's also sold a volume containing the only keyboard music by British composer Henry Purcell to be written in his own hand. An anonymous buyer paid £276,000 (\$416,000) for the 300-year-old manuscript.

Eastwood to star in Bridges Of Madison County

WINTERSET, Iowa (R) — Hollywood's version of the best-selling love story Bridges Of Madison County will be filmed — in Madison County, Clinton — Eastwood will play the itinerant magazine photographer whose brief but enduring affair with a farmer's wife is at the heart of Robert James Waller's best-seller. The female lead has not been cast. Sherry Ellis, executive vice-president of the Winterset Chamber of Commerce, said co-producers Steven Spielberg and Kathleen Kennedy chose the town of 4,200 people southwest of Des Moines to film the movie in August.

Clinton aide resigns after helicopter spin

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton accepted the resignation of a top White House aide for taking a government helicopter on a golf outing. He promised taxpayers would be reimbursed. Mr. Clinton acted quickly to stamp out a new fire in his administration before it got out of control. David Watkins, a longtime Arkansas friend of Mr. Clinton who has been director of the White House Office of Administration, resigned shortly after the golf incident blew up into an embarrassment.

Snake smuggler forks out guilty plea

WASHINGTON (R) — A Parma, Ohio, man pleaded guilty to taking part in a smuggling ring that brought snakes from Papua New Guinea, into the United States since 1987, the Justice Department said. It said Edmund Celebucki smuggled the snakes into the country in suitcases and sold them to collectors for as much as \$3,000 a snake. The operation netted more than \$250,000. Mr. Celebucki, who pleaded guilty in federal court in Akron, faces a maximum penalty of up to 10 years in jail and a \$500,000 fine at his sentencing on Aug. 18.

Schumacher quickest in Barcelona after day of politics and chaos

BARCELONA (R) — World championship leader Michael Schumacher claimed pole position for Sunday's Spanish Grand Prix Friday after a day dominated by politics, bickering and virtual chaos in the paddock.

The 25-year-old German, driving a Benetton, has already won the opening four races of the season and is seeking to add a record-equalling fifth successive season-opening victory to his sequence in Sunday's 65-lap race at the Circuit de Catalunya.

He was in dominant form again Friday, a particularly impressive feat as he and the Benetton team, like the majority of the teams, had not done any practice during the morning free session.

This was because they boycotted the session in support of their protest at the safety measures railroaded through by the International Automobile Federation (FIA) following the recent sequence of fatal and critical accidents in the sport.

At one stage, it seemed the afternoon session might be

run, as was the morning one, with only nine cars, but the arguments were finally resolved.

An overnight dispute over the safety of the circuit was resolved when a makeshift chicane, made of tyres, was positioned before the fast Nissan corner.

This satisfied the Grand Prix Drivers' Association (GDPA) which had threatened to strike if they were not satisfied with the safety level of the track.

But the day was then hit by a continuing row between several of the teams, led by Benetton and their outspoken managing director Flavio Briatore, and the FIA.

It was resolved with a compromise agreement after a crisis meeting between FIA President Max Mosley and the team leaders, which apparently diluted Mosley's power, and the teams rejoined the race meeting.

In hot conditions, Schumacher was quickest in his Benetton ahead of Finland's Mika Hakkinen in a McLaren, Briton Damon Hill in a Williams and Frenchman Jean Alesi in a Ferrari.



Indiana Pacer's Derrick McKey (right) gets pressured by the New York Knicks' Anthony Mason (left) and Charles Oakley (rear) during the first quarter of game two of their Eastern Conference final Thursday in New York. The Knicks, who won the game 89-78, now lead the best-of-seven series 2-0 (AFP photo)

IOC encourages Beijing to bid again

SYDNEY (AFP) — Another bid by China to host the Olympics would be enthusiastically welcomed by the International Olympic Committee, IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch made clear Friday.

Samaranch, here on a three-day tour of preparations for the 2000 games for which Sydney defeated Beijing last September, said IOC officials were currently discussing with Beijing whether it would bid for the 2004 games.

He also reaffirmed IOC hopes of trying to help Sarajevo, site of the 1984 Winter Olympics, to rebuild sports facilities destroyed in the civil war. Samaranch, who visited Sarajevo to make an appeal for peace in February, said the movement planned to spend up to \$10 million in the reconstruction of its sporting facilities when peace returns. He complimented Sydney on the progress it had made.

Sampras, Courier win easily Fernandez upset in French Open

PARIS (AP) — Top-seeded Pete Sampras powered into the fourth round of the French Open Friday, but Mary Joe Fernandez, the women's runner-up last year, was upset by promising Romanian Irina Spirlea.

Two other seeds — No. 16 Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands and No. 15 Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic — also were upset, leaving only eight of the 16 seeds in both the men's and women's fields even before the tournament reached the halfway point.

Ines Gorrochategui of Argentina beat Sukova, 7-6 (10-8), 7-6 (7-1). Mikael Tillstrom of Sweden, a qualifier ranked 226th playing in his first Grand Slam, surprised Krajicek, 7-6 (7-4), 6-2, 6-3 to earn a fourth-round match with Sampras.

"I was just looking forward to playing in the main draw, and suddenly I'm playing my best tennis," said Tillstrom. "I'm thrilled."

He said playing Sampras would be fun, adding, "If I can return his serve, maybe I can beat him."

Sampras, playing his best tennis of the tournament, overwhelmed Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands, 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 in just 99 minutes. Jim Courier, the men's runner-up last year and champion in 1991 and 1992, also advanced with a 6-3, 6-1, 6-1 drubbing of Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman.

"It was a strange match," Courier said. "He made quite a few unforced errors. It's hard to say how I'm hitting the ball."

Among the women advancing to the fourth round was No. 12 seed Mary Pierce of France, who crushed American Lori McNeil, 6-0, 6-0. Pierce, seemingly bearded for a semifinal match with top-seeded Steffi Graf, has lost only two games in three matches.



Jim Courier

No. 7 seed Natalia Zvereva of Belarus beat Austria's Judith Wiesner, 7-5, 7-5 in a second-round match that has been suspended by darkness Thursday.

Sampras had not played Haarhuis before, but was wary of the Dutchman's record as a Grand Slam giant-killer — with victories over John McEnroe, Goran Ivanisevic and Boris Becker.

"I didn't want to give him an opportunity to get into his game and I did a pretty good job of that," Sampras said. "I didn't take him lightly by any means."

Sampras said he was trying not to be distracted by the fact that a title here would make him the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to win all four Grand Slam championships.

"It would definitely be a very sweet story if I could come through and win here," he said. "It's definitely the biggest challenge of my career to win here, so I'll do everything I can to do it."

"I didn't feel I was playing bad, but he was playing too

good for me," Haarhuis said of Sampras. "He has a good chance to win."

The 20-year-old Spirlea, ranked 41st in the world, outran and outhit the 10th-seeded Fernandez in a one-sided 6-4, 6-1 victory.

"Once she got into the match, she got confident and started to play very well," said Fernandez, who had never seen Spirlea play before this week.

Last year, in what she and her coach depicted as a breakthrough, Fernandez lost a three-set final to Steffi Graf after victories over Gabriela Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Sabatini. She rallied from a 1-6, 1-5 deficit in her quarterfinal against Sabatini, one of the great all-time Grand Slam comebacks.

Bur Fernandez said her preparation for the French Open were hampered by health problems and limited play on clay.

Spirlea had lost in the first round in her two previous Grand Slams, but showed promise at the Italian Open earlier this month by beating Sabatini en route to a semifinal loss to Martina Navratilova.

The Romanian's likely opponent in the fourth round is Graf, the No. 1 seed and overwhelming favorite.

Spirlea refused to speculate on her chances.

"That's too quickly," she said. "I just finished my match. I'll have time to think about it."

Graf faced Joannette Kruger of South Africa in a third-round match later Friday.

On Thursday, the spotlight fell on two durable pros who rarely get much attention — Aaron Krickstein and Ronald Agener.

Agener, at 29 the oldest man left in the field, outlasted 21-year-old David Prinosil in the longest French Open match since the tiebreaker was adopted in 1973.

Brazil World Cup squad arrives to raucous welcome

SAN JOSE, California (R) — Three-time world champions Brazil were ready to begin their quest for a fourth World Cup title after the team arrived in northern California Thursday.

The team landed at San Jose International after a 13-hour flight from Rio de Janeiro and were greeted by a jazz band, the Brazilian consul and a number of local dignitaries, before passing through customs at the usually sedate airport.

At the terminal, the team was besieged by 100 noisy Brazilian fans, who banged drums, chanted and cheered outside a chaotic 30-minute news conference.

"In two years we have been here six times, but this time it's different," said Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira of his team's trips to the United States.

"This is a big moment for Brazil and in our life. We are ready and we are hoping for the best."

Parreira, who has already released a numerical roster, denied that numbers 1-11 signified a probable starting lineup for the team's June 20 opener against Russia at Stanford Stadium.

"The numbers are not a commitment," he said. "We

have not mapped out the team yet. This time we hope to prepare the team in a better way."

Asked what the American public could expect from the Brazilians, Parreira said: "You don't only have art in soccer, you have to compete as well."

"In Brazil we do things differently. We play good possession and we're quite sure we'll give good performances."

Not exactly showing team spirit, temperamental star striker Romario was the main focus of media attention after his demands for a window seal on the flight and final say over his seating partners.

"The airline just mixed the tickets," Parreira smiled. "But we had a plane for 300 people and only 44 on board. So people could relax and spread out."

The Brazilians will train at Santa Clara University before leaving for tune-up matches against Canada in Edmonton, June 5, Honduras in San Diego, June 8 and El Salvador in Fresno, California, June 12.

Brazil is the seeded team in Group B and will play two matches at Stanford against Russia June 20 and Cameroon June 24, before meeting Sweden in the Pontiac Silverdome June 26.

World Cup security bungle causes alarm

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The killing of a policeman playing the role of a football hooligan during a practice run has reinforced fears that U.S. security forces might overreact if there is any trouble during the World Cup.

An investigation has been ordered in California where the policeman was shot dead on a train by a fellow officer.

"I have great concern that domestic law enforcement is going to confuse the passionate support of soccer fans with much publicised hooliganism," said World Cup chief Alan Rothenberg.

"I fear police will take drastic action against people who are harmless and that the media will report it as soccer violence."

"Undoubtedly there will be some fistcuffs, some arguments," he said. "I hope to God police don't overreact and hope the media don't then make a big deal about soccer violence."

Rothenberg said football's reputation in America was unfair.

"I guarantee there will be a lot less mayhem on the field than we've seen in basketball and major league baseball recently," he said.

Although England's infamous fans will not be in America for the finals which kick-off next month, West German and Dutch fans are expected in their thousands.

The Netherlands and Germany have a core of hardened hooligans who are amongst the most violent in the world.

Rothenberg said the ultimate responsibility for public safety rested with local authorities in the nine host cities.

Police at three venues have clashed with organisers over the fencing in of pitches, although Rothenberg said he still hoped police in Washington and Dallas could be persuaded from putting up fences.

Organisers also recommended restricting alcohol sales throughout venue cities on game day as the Italians did in 1990.

However, the stringency of the measures depends on local officials.

"We are ready for whatever might occur," says Dave Jensen, head of the Washington site.

"American police have never experienced football hooligans going on the rampage and European hooligans have never come across a police force that not only carries guns but uses them," said a European diplomat who is helping with security.

"Some police in Europe carry guns, but they would not draw them when handling rioting hooligans. Here they will. The ingredients are there for a possible tragedy," he added.

World Cup security chief Ed Best admits that despite all the attempts to halt known hooligans from getting into the country, many will still make it.

"I'm not guaranteeing we won't have an incident," Best said. "It would be foolish to do that. We will not be able to anticipate everything. This is a

strange world. But if we do have one, we will handle it. The key is planning."

Dallas Deputy Police Chief Rick Hattler is busy preparing for the "invasion."

"The question is not if they come, it's how many and where they will cause problems," he says. "We won't be repressive, but we will take aggressive action if there are problems."

Security measures will differ slightly by venue, but metal detectors, detailed surveillance cameras and guards can be expected everywhere.

Chicago security manager Lee Floss, who will spend his World Cup watching the crowds on special cameras, explained: "If there is a dime on the ground, these cameras can see the date."

But he admitted: "We've already done a lot to keep hooligans away. We can deal with 10 or 15 troublemakers. It's the 500 that are hard to handle."

Security officials have been observing how the British, German, Italian and Swedish police deal with hooligans and even the Defence Department has been helping out.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Haya chosen to international team

ROME (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein has been selected to join the Higher International Military Sports Council to represent it in various horse riding tournaments. Princess Haya was chosen to the council's team, which includes only 10 riders from various world countries, since she is the only female rider to participate in the eighth military championship hosted currently by Italy and due to her good performance and results at the championships. Princess Haya is the first Arab rider to be chosen by the council. Her Royal Highness ranked 15th in the 130-140 centimetres showjumping tournament out of a total number of 47 competitors and was 13th in the 120-130 competition out of 37 riders.

Head-butting player gets 2nd fine

LONDON (AP) — Mir Zaman Gul, the Pakistani squash player who head-butted an opponent during the British Open last month, was fined £500 (\$750) Thursday and banned from next year's tournament. In announcing the punishment, the British Squash Rackets Association said Gul's actions in the match against Anthony Hill of Australia were "wholly inappropriate for a squash player and have brought the game into disrepute." The incident had already brought Gul a £1,500 (\$2,250) fine and four-month suspension from the tour, announced last month by the Professional Squash Association, the sport's world governing body.

Fashanu in clear

LONDON (AFP) — Wimbledon striker John Fashanu has escaped action over alleged "elbowing," for the second time in six months. Relegated Oldham Athletic submitted a video to the Football Association of their 3-0 Premiership defeat at Selhurst Park last month, claiming a Fashanu challenge had left defender Richard Johnson with concussion. However, after studying the film, the FA decided to take no action against Fashanu, 30, who was also cleared after a November clash with Gary Mabbutt left the Tottenham defender needing surgery for severe facial injuries.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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THROW IN THE TOWEL

Both vulnerable, North deals.

NORTH
♠ K Q 7 6
♥ A J 8
♦ K 4 3
♣ A 4 3

WEST
♠ 5 4
♥ 10 7 2
♦ J 10 8 7
♣ J 10 8 7

EAST
♠ Q 8 5 3
♥ Q 8 6 5
♦ Q 8 6 5
♣ 8 6 5

SOUTH
♠ A J 10 9 2
♥ K 9 4
♦ A 2
♣ K J 2

The bidding:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass 8 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of
Here's a hand to puzzle the finessers. How would you opt to play six spades after 1-4-3-lead of the jack of diamonds?

The answer was straightforward. North's four clubs was an advance cue-bid showing first-round club control, a maximum no trump and excellent spade support. With at least 33 points guaranteed in the combined hands, six spades was an easy decision for South.

West led the jack of diamonds, declaring won in hand and drew trumps in two rounds. How would you proceed?

One way would be to take finesses in hearts and clubs. If either succeeds, you have 12 tricks. Not bad, since the odds in favor of one of two finesses succeeding is 3-to-1.

Slightly better is to cash the king of diamonds and ruff a diamond, then cash the ace-king of one suit. If the queen does not drop, play a third round of that suit and, depending on which defender wins the trick, you will either be able to claim your contract or else have to fall back on a finesse.

Which suit should you select for the throw-in? There's a simple guideline—use the weaker of the two suits! Since clubs is the weaker suit here (the combined hand holding includes the nine) cash the ace and king of clubs and surrender the club. After West wins the contract of 4 ♠, you will make the queen of hearts. On the forced heart return, play low from dummy. If East produces the ten, win the king and then finesse the jack. On this line of the cards the queen pops up immediately, so you are home free.

FOR RENT

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Sharon to challenge Rabin

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli right-winger Ariel Sharon split the already foundering opposition Likud Party on Friday by launching his own campaign to unseat Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in elections scheduled for 1996.

Mr. Sharon's announcement that he would run in Israel's first direct election of a prime minister was a slap in the face to Likud's new leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who is struggling to mount effective opposition to Mr. Rabin's peace deal with the PLO.

Mr. Sharon, who spearheaded Israel's controversial 1982 invasion of Lebanon, said he would remain in Likud but try to head a front of right-wing parties. Likud stalwarts branded Mr. Sharon a subversive who had no chance of toppling Mr. Rabin.

"I am making preparations to contest the prime minister's

office in the 1996 elections," Mr. Sharon told Israel Radio. The 66-year-old former cited his experience fighting in Israel's wars as preparation for Israel's top job.

"Arik Sharon is a permanent subversive," Mr. Netanyahu told army radio. "The time has come for such a man to leave Likud."

"That Arik Sharon wants to be prime minister — at a minimum, prime minister — is no surprise," insisted Mr. Netanyahu, 44, who is as yet untested in a national election.

In rhetoric typical of Likud, Mr. Sharon countered: "I hope Mr. Netanyahu will at least permit me to stay in the country."

Former Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, ousted by Mr. Rabin in 1992 elections, urged Mr. Sharon to drop his plans for the poll due to take place by October 1996.

Parliament member

Binyamin Begin, son of the late Likud founder Menachem Begin, said the burly Sharon was about as likely to win the election as the World Tennis Championship.

A Dahaf poll for the daily Yedioth Ahronoth last week showed Mr. Rabin the preferred Israeli leader among 36 per cent of Israelis, followed by Mr. Netanyahu with 19 per cent of the support and Mr. Sharon with 12 per cent.

Former army chief Rafael Eitan, 64, who announced his candidacy in October, took fourth place with 11 per cent.

Under election reforms, Israel's prime minister will for the first time be chosen directly by popular vote. Failure of any one candidate to win more than 50 per cent of the vote would force a runoff between the top two candidates.

Previously the prime minister was leader of the party able to garner the support of a

parliamentary majority.

As defence minister in 1982, Mr. Sharon launched an invasion of Lebanon with the declared aim of destroying what he saw as the Palestinian threat there. But the occupation of South Lebanon grew unpopular as Israeli casualties grew.

Mr. Sharon lost the defence post in 1983 after an official inquiry found him indirectly responsible for the Beirut massacre of Palestinian refugees.

While housing minister in 1991, Mr. Sharon was snubbed during a visit to Washington for spearheading a West Bank Jewish settlement drive that Israel's guarding U.S. ally assailed as an obstacle to peace.

Mr. Rabin froze the housing drive when he took office and accelerated peace talks with the Palestinians that led to Israel's handover this month of the West Bank town of Jericho and most of the Gaza Strip.



JOINT PATROL: Israeli border policemen shake hands with their Palestinian counterparts before setting out on a patrol along the road

leading to the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the centre of the Gaza Strip. The patrol has managed to avoid misunderstandings and incidents (AFP photo)

Gunmen seized, hostages freed in Russia

MOSCOW (AP) — Elite troops captured a gang of kidnappers and freed their four hostages unharmed Friday in southern Russia, only hours after the gunmen had fled aboard a helicopter with millions of dollars in ransom, police said.

There were conflicting reports about the fate of at least one of the four kidnappers and the size of the ransom.

Some officials and news agencies said one of the men was killed in a shootout as he tried to flee.

The kidnappers' MI-8 helicopter took off at 9:15 a.m. (0515 GMT) with a three-man military crew at the controls, said Maj. Viktor Gusakov, an Interior Ministry spokesman in the southern Russian city of Mineralnye Vody.

Military helicopters carrying anti-terrorist squads were close behind, he said.

About three hours later, the MI-8 landed near the settlement of Bacha-Yurt in Chechnya, about 15 kilometres (10 miles) from the border with the region of Dagestan.

Igor Denisov, another Interior Ministry spokesman in Mineralnye Vody, said elite troops captured all four kidnappers, but other officials said news agencies said one was killed.

Alexander Kalmykov, a police official in Mineralnye

Vody, said there were also reports the kidnappers had "burned" some of the ransom money.

Mr. Enisov said the kidnappers got \$10 million, but an Interior Ministry spokesman in Moscow, Yuri Reshetnik, said the ransom was \$4 million. He said all the money was recovered.

Mr. Reshetnik said the hostage-takers were citizens of Chechnya, a mountainous, breakaway region of Russia famed for its fierce warrior culture and its ruthless criminal gangs.

The hostage drama began Thursday afternoon when the four men, armed with guns and a grenade, seized a bus loaded with schoolchildren, teachers and parents.

Leaving the driver and most of the male passengers behind, they headed for the airport at the resort city of Mineralnye Vody, 1,300 kilometres south of Moscow, with 29 hostages, including eight children.

The bus driver told police the kidnappers were armed with a short-barrel assault rifle, a pistol and a grenade.

En route to Mineralnye Vody, police surrounded the bus at the village of Kangly. The kidnappers threatened to decapitate the children.

After several hours of negotiations, they traded the chil-

dren and one adult for four Kalashnikov assault rifles, ammunition, four flak jackets, night vision devices and 10 ampoules or containers of morphine, Mr. Gusakov said.

At Mineralnye Vody, the kidnappers let airport workers bring food and water to their 20 remaining captives. The kidnappers negotiated with authorities over a portable radio.

Early Friday, the kidnappers traded all but four hostages for millions of dollars in cash, the MI-8 helicopter and three more automatic rifles.

The bus was en route from Vladikavkaz in the North Ossetia region to Stavropol, according to the Ministry for Emergency Situations.

The kidnapping was eerily similar to a hostage-taking in December in southern Russia.

In a four-day December saga, four gunmen swapped a dozen schoolchildren from Rostov-on-Don for \$10 million and a helicopter. Their getaway failed when the helicopter's engine stalled and they had to make a forced landing in the mountains, where they were captured.

None of the hostages was injured but hundreds of thousands of dollars of the ransom money disappeared after the kidnappers tossed handfuls of hundred-dollar bills out of the helicopter.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran accused of involvement in inter-Kurdish clashes

NICOSIA (AP) — A Kurdish faction Friday accused Iran of providing increasing military support for a rival group as factional fighting among Iraq's Kurds raged on for a third week. Iranian-backed radical Kurdish groups "are trying to establish footholds in various border areas supported by multiple rocket launcher and artillery fire from Iran," claimed Barham Saleh, a spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. He said Iranian pashdaran, or revolutionary guard, troops were fighting with the Kurdistan Democratic Party and its two radical allies, the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan and Kurdistan Revolutionary Hizbollah. The Iranian forces were shelling areas west of the border town of Halabja, following a big battle for a road crossing in the region on Thursday, Mr. Saleh told the Associated Press by telephone. Halabja is 160 kilometres east of Kirkuk, the main town in northern Iraq.

3rd arms inspection team to arrive in Iraq

MANAMA (AP) — A 10-member team of U.N. arms experts prepared Friday for a trip to Iraq where they will spin and catalog facilities and equipment that could be used to produce banned biological warfare programmes. The information, to be gathered from various facilities in and around Baghdad, is part of the process to develop a baseline for long-term monitoring of Iraq's arms, said David Frazz, the American team leader. The U.N. Special Commission is in charge of dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and ensuring Baghdad does not try to revive any arms programmes in the nuclear, chemical or biological or long-range missiles. When the process is completed, the Security Council may decide on when to lift an oil and trade embargo clamped on Iraq since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Ukraine nuclear sector needs \$14b — Kravchuk

CHERNOBYL, Ukraine (R) — President Leonid Kravchuk said Friday that Ukraine needed \$14 billion to make the Chernobyl nuclear power station safe and develop its nuclear industry properly. Mr. Kravchuk, touring the plant for the first time since the 1986 disaster there, said Ukraine intended to keep it open despite calls to close it. He also pledged to develop Ukraine's energy sector. "To talk about closing the station without any basis or alternatives is pointless... but pressure is being put on us. We must withstand it," Mr. Kravchuk told members of the plant's 4,500 staff. "When we pulled troops out of Germany, all questions were resolved. Apartments were built, social issues were dealt with. For matters like this \$10 billion is needed. We must add \$4 billion for the station itself, bringing the total to \$14 billion. But we simply do not have the money."

Executions greet MFN renewal in China

MACAU (AFP) — Ten men were executed Friday for crimes ranging from murder to motorcycle theft in nearby Zhuhai city, only hours after the United States renewed China's trading privileges. Fourteen cities and counties staged executions around the southernmost province, but while the total number of executed convicts was not immediately known, 10 were put to death by a firing squad in the nearby city of Zhuhai. Aged 20 to 30, the convicts were first tried in front of an audience of workers by the Zhuhai Intermediate People's Court, then put into a truck and driven to a remote mountain area for immediate execution. Portugal's Lusa News Agency, quoting court officials, said the men's appeals for lesser sentences had all been "rejected outright." Two of the convicts were charged with murder and the others accused of lesser crimes such as kidnapping, blackmail, and the theft of cars and motorcycles, Lusa reported. U.S. President Bill Clinton had announced overnight that he was renewing China's most-favoured-nation (MFN) trading status, as well as delisting human rights from trade.

U.K. tests missile after protest at sea

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — The successful firing of Britain's first Trident 2 nuclear missile off the coast of Florida was "an historic milestone," British Secretary of State for Defence Malcolm Rifkind said Friday. "The royal navy have lived up to their finest traditions," Mr. Rifkind said in a news conference after the submarine returned to port at Cape Canaveral early Friday. He said the test was "an even more stimulating occasion" after Greenpeace activists in inflatable rafts thwarted attempts, Greenpeace members floated above the HMS Vanguard in the waters off Cape Canaveral as the submarine ascended, forcing the craft to submerge without firing the missile. Greenpeace spokeswoman Cindy Baxter told Reuters by telephone. U.S. Air Force spokeswoman Terri Bracher said protesters were outside a danger zone around the submerged vessel by the time the unarmed missile shot skyward at 6:15 p.m. EDT (2315 GMT) Thursday.

Japan denounces whale sanctuary

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan Friday denounced the International Whaling Commission's decision to establish a whale sanctuary in the Antarctic and threatened to review its links with the organisation. "We have options ranging widely from withdrawal from the IWC to unconditional acceptance of the decision," a senior official of the state fishery agency told Japanese reporters. The Japanese government and fishery industry, which insisted that the world's estimated 750,000 minke whales were exploitable, denounced as "unscientific" the vote at the IWC meeting in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, Japan, for which whaling is a traditional delicacy, has proposed to hunt up to 2,000 minke whales and said it would not threaten the species. Mutsuki Kato, the minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, told a press conference: "We will have to review in detail the impact on research whaling and Japan's contributions to the IWC." He added that Japan would study whether it would appeal the decision within 90 days as prescribed by IWC rules.

India developing air-defence system

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India plans to conduct tests soon of an indigenous air defence system similar to the Patriot used by U.S. troops against Iraqi Scud missiles during the Gulf War, the Asian Age newspaper reported Friday. The air defence system consists of state-of-the-art Phased Array Radar combined with the medium-range surface-to-air Akash, or "Sky" missile, the newspaper said. Scientists at the Defence Research and Development Organisation told the daily that the Rajendra phased array radar can track several targets at once and guide a missile in for a mid-air kill. "It's a fantastic system. Its capability has put India firmly on the world radar map," a radar specialist was quoted as saying. The radar was designed and built at the Electronics and Radar Development Establishment in the southern city of Bangalore.

Prince Charles arrives in Berlin

BERLIN (AFP) — The Prince of Wales arrived here Friday to address international business leaders and attend the last military parade of British troops in Berlin as part of a one-day visit to the German capital. His aircraft landed at RAF Gatow, which used to be a German Luftwaffe (air force) academy until the Royal Air Force took it over at the end of World War II and made it the airport of the British garrison. British military sources said that Prince Charles flew the plane himself, a BAe 146 of the Queens Flight. The worlds busiest airport at the height of the Berlin Airlift in 1949, RAF Gatow is to be handed back to the Luftwaffe when the last British forces pull out of the city in September.

Dutch justice minister resigns

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Dutch Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch Ballin resigned Friday following a police scandal, the government announced. Right and left wing deputies had joined Wednesday to pass a motion of no confidence in Mr. Ballin. Mr. Ballin and Interior Minister Ed Van Thijn were accused of failing to set up safety measures after disbanding an inter-regional police team in 1993, and Mr. Ballin was also blamed for the disappearance of 36 tonnes of soft drugs from a 40-tonne consignment imported as "bait" for underworld figures.

Duma defies Yeltsin on TV broadcasts

MOSCOW (R) — The Russian Duma (lower house of parliament) defied President Boris Yeltsin Friday and voted to create daily radio and television slots to broadcast its own account of proceedings. The president's office attacked the plan, comparing it with actions by the old legislature Mr. Yeltsin abolished by force in October. "The practice of wholesale acquisition of time... is in essence an attempt by the Duma to create privileges for itself in broadcasting information," presidential spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said in a statement issued Thursday. "The president of Russia is concerned that the renewal of attempts to impose its will... could damage the process of social reconciliation," he added. But the Duma passed a resolution Friday setting up a company that would prepare daily broadcasts for state radio and television. Communist and nationalist deputies view the programmes as a counter-balance to pro-Yeltsin news media they say give a biased account of the Duma or ignore it altogether.

Texas, Washington execute murderers

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (AFP) — A man who knifed two women and a girl to death in 1982 was hanged in Walla Walla, Washington, early Friday, two hours after another convicted murderer was executed by lethal injection in Texas. Charles Rodman Campbell, 39, was subdued with pepper spray by police before he was handcuffed and taken from his cell to the gallows, a Washington Corrections Department spokesman said. Campbell was convicted of knifing two women and an eight-year-old girl to death in 1982. One of the women had been raped eight years earlier by Campbell, who was on a work-release programme when he slashed the throats of his former victim, her daughter and a neighbour. The girl was nearly beheaded. The Supreme court rejected a last minute appeal. Mr. Campbell's lawyers arguing, among other things, that hanging was cruel and unusual punishment. Two hours earlier, Stephen Netherly, 33, was administered a lethal injection in a maximum-security prison in Huntsville, Texas. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Amen," Mr. Netherly said at the end of a short prayer in which he asked that others pray for his family and the family of his victim.

U.K. Labour team meet Hariri

BEIRUT (AP) — A British Labour Party delegation, the first to visit Beirut in 20 years, met Friday with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and discussed the progress of reconstruction after the 1975-90 Lebanese civil war. "We had a frank, open and very useful discussion," said Michael Watson, a parliament member who headed the seven-member team to the meeting. "We are very keen to see how Lebanon is and the Lebanese are doing after the civil war and the restoration of democracy." Mr. Watson told reporters. The talks also dealt with Israel's occupation of a border enclave in South Lebanon and the 2½-year-old Middle East peace process. Mr. Watson added. The group flew in from London Thursday.

Thais issue warrants for 2 Iranians

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thai police have issued warrants for the arrest of two Iranians suspected of involvement in a plot to explode a booby-trapped truck at the Israeli embassy in March, police said Friday. A police official identified the two Iranians as Mohammad Lotfollah and Hossein Shahriarfar, both about 40 years old, who were believed to have fled Thailand. The official gave the names phonetically in Thai, saying there were no written documents which implicated the two. He did not say how they were believed to have been involved. Thai translators were preparing an English version of the warrants for transmission to Interpol, which has been asked to help, the official said.

COLUMN

Khaleda Zia sends her foe gifts from Mecca

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh's Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, a rare gesture of goodwill, has sent gifts she brought from Mecca to her arch political enemy, opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, her aides said Friday. They said the gifts Mrs. Khaleda collected while performing haj last week included a prayer mat and prayer beads. Political analysts said the move indicated Mrs. Khaleda's willingness to resolve differences arising from an opposition boycott of parliament. The standoff began in February when opposition members, led by Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, walked out of parliament to protest against remarks by Information Minister Nazmul Huda that allegedly offended their religious sentiments. They decided not to return until Mr. Huda apologized, something he has so far refused to do. Mrs. Khaleda and Mrs. Hasina led a joint campaign in 1990 that climaxed in the ousting of former President Hossein Mohammad Ershad, a military strongman who ruled the country for nearly nine years. Since then a rift between the two women has left them refusing to speak to each other in either public or private, sources close to them say. Mrs. Khaleda took over as prime minister following Bangladesh's first free elections in February 1991, three months after Geo. Ershad's fall from power. Mrs. Hasina's Awami League emerged as the biggest opposition party.

10-month-old lives 4 days without food

CAIRO (AP) — A 10-month-old baby lived four days without milk or water after her mother and father suffocated from carbon monoxide in their apartment, a newspaper reported Friday. "The apartment was full of fumes, and the baby was very yellow," Maj. Fawzy Salah, the policeman who found the bodies, told the Associated Press. The government-owned newspaper Al Akhbar said neighbours called police after detecting a stench emanating from Erian Awad's apartment. Maj. Salah and his colleagues broke in and found Marmar Awad, the baby, in the bedroom. Her parents lay in the bathroom, dead. "What helped the baby most is that she had a fan working beside her, and the shutters were open," Maj. Salah said. The bodies of Awad, a 30-year-old bus conductor, and the mother, Insaaf Youssef, 27, were apparently suffocated in the bathroom from a faulty botane gas water heater like that used in many Egyptian houses. A neighbour ousting her own 4-month-old baby took the child, Maj. Salah said, and "she sneaked milk continually for 15 minutes." Al Akhbar quoted a pathologist, Fakhray Salah, as saying a baby can remain alive for an inordinate amount of time by feeding off its body fat.

Mystery alumnus gives big to university

HONG KONG (AFP) — A bashful Hong Kong graduate of Canada's McGill University is giving his alma mater eight million Canadian dollars (\$5.8 million) to build a new engineering building, its principal said. David Johnston declined to name the mystery donor, saying a promise of anonymity had been made by the university. But he told reporters it was likely the building would be named in the benefactor's honour when it opens in a few years' time on the university's campus in downtown Montreal. Nearly 700 graduates of McGill University live in Hong Kong, including Chye Kuok, whose father Robert Kuok is one of the territory's wealthiest tycoons and a confidant of top Chinese leaders. Others are Anna Pao Soehmen, daughter of the late shipping magnate Sir Y.K. Pao, and Edward Leong, a prominent doctor who represents the medical profession in the Legislative Council. The mystery donation represents two-thirds of the 12 million Canadian dollars (\$8.7 million) McGill University has gathered so far in Hong Kong as part of its 200 million Canadian dollar (\$145 million) fundraising drive. Several thousand Hong Kongers hold degrees from universities in Canada, which remains the most popular destination for emigrants from the British colony in the run-up to Chinese rule in 1997.

NATO: Dialogue with Russia serious, intense

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO Deputy Secretary-General Sergio Balanzino, describing dialogue with Russia as serious and intense, said Friday he hoped the former cold war foe would soon sign a partnership deal with the military alliance.

"To deal with Russia is not a walk in the park," Mr. Balanzino told reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels after the former Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan signed up for NATO's Partnership for Peace (PFP) programme.

"It's a dialogue (with Russia) which is becoming serious and intense," he added, stressing he hoped that Russia would soon join PFP. Kazakhstan is the 19th country to join PFP, a programme

aimed at forging closer military ties between NATO and its former cold war enemies.

"By now, we should count not those who have become partners, but those who remain outside," Mr. Balanzino said.

Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabaev also urged Russia to sign up for PFP, but said he did not believe Moscow should have a special relationship with NATO.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev told NATO defence ministers in Brussels Wednesday that Russia wanted special ties with NATO on security issues and said Moscow wanted to set up an "active mechanism" through which Russia and the alliance

could regularly tackle security issues.

He handed over a list of proposals to NATO for a future relationship with the alliance, but said these should not be seen as conditions for joining PFP.

Mr. Balanzino said NATO was currently examining the document of proposals and hoped to come to a conclusion soon.

But he said it was unlikely that Russia would sign PFP at a meeting of alliance foreign ministers in Istanbul next month.

"I would prefer to be a bit more cautious and leave all the chances open and not pin down a date for the signing of the document," he said.

مجلس أمناء الجامعة